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## CURRENT COMMENT.

THOSE who wish to estimate the value of political government in dollars and cents may get a starter for their calculations from the statistician of the National City Bank of New York. The aggregate national debts of the world now come to \$265 billion as against \$44 billion before the war. That brings the *per capita* debt to about \$130 for every man, woman, and child on the globe; and the interest-charge comes to six dollars for each and every one, as against one dollar in 1913.

THE National City Bank can not be regarded as precisely a centre of bolshevik propaganda, y'understand, yet one can hardly face those figures without wondering whether the constructive achievements of political government are really worth the money. If political government has landed us in the hole to the rousing tune of \$130 per individual, the world over—fixing an annual interest-charge of about thirty dollars per normal family of five, the world over—it should have done something really valuable and necessary, such as we could not well get on without. It should have given us benefits so clearly and obviously ahead of any that a non-political or administrative government could give us, that there would be no question about its superiority and indispensableness. Has it done so?

WELL, of the money appropriated for the current fiscal year by the United States Government, which is the branch of political government that we as a people are most interested in, more than ninety-two per cent went to the upkeep of the army and navy and to pay the costs of war. All our public works, such as the upkeep of post-roads, rivers and harbours, public buildings, etc., accounted for a bare three per cent of the total. The cost of Congress, the Executive, the courts, and the Departments of State and of Justice, came to a trifle over three per cent; and all the educational and developmental activities of the Federal Government put together—the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Education, Bureau of Standards, the Geological Survey, the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, and the like, cost only 1.01 per cent of the total.

MEN and brethren, think it over. This is a particularly good time to scratch our heads over this exhibit

of elementary arithmetic, because the political conventions are just over, and by reading any account of them in any newspaper, we can get an excellent idea of the kind of thing we are investing in. We can see what sort of gentry we are committing ourselves to, and can form a fair notion of their principles, motives, and intentions, and we can make a fair forecast of what they will do when they get their hands on our money. The foregoing summary shows what their predecessors have done, and where we all stand in consequence. The advocates of economic or administrative government may be touting a very bad thing, but suppose they should ask us to show how we could possibly be any worse off under it than we now are. If any one can answer that question, he is just the man this paper wants to see.

THE attitude of many people, however, towards economic government, is that of inclination towards an untried thing out of sheer dissatisfaction with a thing that has been abundantly tried and found bad. An English labour-leader said the other day:

We support the principle of economic democracy. . . . We oppose the principle of political democracy. . . . Parliament is a product of capitalist evolution and is only an instrument in the hands of the bourgeois class, to more effectively maintain their bourgeois dictatorship. At best, it is only a safety-valve to dissipate the passion for social justice. A few soporific palliatives are its highest possibilities. It never has been, and never will be, of the slightest use to the working class in their struggle for economic emancipation. . . . The workers are travelling rapidly in the direction of obtaining control of industry. They will travel with accelerating speed as they learn the unwisdom of relying on Parliament. The glamour of Parliament has attractions which many good men are reluctant to forego, but as these men grow in strength and clearness of view they will discard the plutocratic institution and learn the wisdom of direct action and complete control of industrial affairs in the communal interest. The labour movement in England is travelling in the direction of the tactics adopted by the Russian Soviets and the Sinn Feiners in Ireland. This is no doubt an overstatement of fact, but it points out the general direction of a good deal of popular thought.

WHILE on this subject, it is also well to take careful note of the depreciation in the value of war-bonds, and the psychological effect of their steady flow towards concentration in the hands of small and strong financial groups. Perhaps eleven millions of our people bought war-bonds, and it is a fair guess that ten millions out of the eleven never before owned a bond in their lives. We all remember the reckless promises and extravagant assurances made when these bonds were hawked about our streets—that they would always be good as gold and would be at this, that and the other absurd premium in no time at all. Now that these bonds are obstinately below par and are being sucked up in a steady stream by the great finance-companies, how can the ten million help wondering, restlessly if vaguely, whether this state of affairs was not more or less premeditated, and whether their honest emotions were not adroitly played upon for gain?

JINGOES during the war were fond of talking about the necessity of drawing on the future in order to save the world for democracy. One of our leading chauvinist organs even went so far as to address a letter to posterity, explaining that we felt called upon to fight a

war we could not pay for, and that we should have to present the bill to them. It is true that the war-makers can take over for their purposes existent goods in exchange for mortgages on goods to be produced in the future, but unfortunately they can not levy on unproduced goods for present purposes. Food, for instance, can not be eaten until it is produced. The world's food supply, because of the long excess of consumption over production during the war, and the continued excess during the subsequent wars, is approaching the vanishing point; and the fact is attested by the frequent reports of food riots, from Shanghai to Madrid. In Poland, 60,000 orphans are starving, while the few remaining resources of the nation are being drained by the offensive being carried on against the Soviet Government by the young imperialist cut-throats of Poland, backed by the old imperialist cut-throats of the Entente. In Germany, food is so scarce and prices so high that the despair-driven populace in Hamburg, Berlin, and other cities, has taken to helping itself as chance offers. The situation is pretty much the same all over Europe. Meanwhile the prosperous-looking gentlemen responsible for this state of affairs continue to support new imperialist schemes and plan new wars, oblivious to the fact that the time is near when there will be nothing to fight them on and nobody to fight them. If there is any democracy left when these gentlemen get through, it is about the only thing that will be left.

SOME of our little ways seem to be only imperfectly understood by the untutored foreigner and his governments. The Italian Government has made an official request for information about the death of Andrea Salsedo, who leaped, fell, or was thrown from the fourteenth floor of the Park Row building where he had been held by the Department of Justice. The inquisitive Royal Italian Consulate also wants to know why Salsedo was kept in a private calaboose of Mr. Palmer's rather than in a regularly established Federal prison. The Administration ought to have a bold hand and a rough word ready for this inquiry. Lynch law in any and all of its fifty-seven varieties has for three years been good enough for American citizens; and anything good enough for American citizens, by jingo, is good enough for any dago that ever ate spaghetti.

THEN again, Mr. Philips Price, correspondent of the London *Daily Herald*, is in receipt of information from the Independent Socialist Party that it was prevented by the American military authorities from carrying out its Reichstag election-campaign. On 20 May, its election-agent, Reubhausen, was called before the American officer who is chief of the Political Department in Coblenz, and summarily expelled from the Rhineland; and told, furthermore, that any other organizer of the Independent Party who came into the district occupied by our troops, would share the same fate. Thus the only political activity permitted is that of what Mr. Philips Price indelicately calls the reactionary Centre party, which we would call, and any proper person should call, safe and sane. The working-classes are bitter about the matter; which simply shows again how impossible it is to get the foreigner to appreciate our civilization. This method with socialists is the very best thing we do, and we ought to get credit for it. Even Mr. Philips Price himself, being a jaundiced Englishman, lets fly a nasty sneer about "making the world safe for hypocrisy." He really ought to be ashamed of himself.

THE interviews with Brother Krassin reported in this country show an odd semblance of sense. For instance, in discussing Mr. Lloyd George's ultimatum that British private losses in Russia, due to the revolution, must be made good, he reveals the fact that Russian capitalists did what any one under the circumstances would naturally do, and made over their property to outsiders, under a "gentleman's agreement"; and observes that to recognize these transactions would be tantamount to nullify-

ing the general policy of nationalization. He says, further:

Both our public debt and the private interests in question can be discussed only at a general peace conference. At any such conference we, of course, should press our counter claims, such, for instance, as the losses sustained by Russia through the operations of Admiral Kolchak, General Judenich, General Denikin, General Wrangel, and others supported by the Allies. Our people can not understand why foreign capitalists, who lost money through the revolution, should be compensated, while Russian peasants, whose houses have been burned through the instrumentality of the same capitalists, should not be compensated. Our people are also puzzled at the fact that such countries as Italy and Serbia, not to mention others, are getting indemnities from Germany, whereas Russia, which punished Germany so much more and herself suffered so much more, not only gets nothing, but is asked to pay a sort of indemnity to the Allies.

It really is a little hard to understand, on the face of it. One would think that anyone, whether friendly or unfriendly to Brother Krassin's general doctrine of society, would acknowledge that there is justice and savvy in those observations. But logic and justice have so little place in orthodox statecraft that Brother Krassin has probably wasted his breath; and surely he has wasted it, as far as Mr. Lloyd George is concerned.

A NOTE from London intimates that the appointment of Lord d'Abernon as British Ambassador to Berlin has given Lord Curzon offence. Mr. Lloyd George's secretary, Sir Philip Kerr, appears to have taken a hand at the Foreign Office in "putting over" a man whose mind will not run in the same channels as the Foreign Minister's. It is rather an unusual performance, but Lord d'Abernon's record gives one the ground for a guess. Before the war, Sir Edgar Vincent, as he was then, sat in the House for Exeter, as a Conservative. When Joseph Chamberlain was converted to the protective-tariff principle, Sir Edgar was among the first of the Conservative members to oppose the attempt to commit the party, and threw in his lot with the conservative free-traders. When Turkish finances baffled the wits of French bankers and kept English merchants awake o' nights, he stepped in and straightened them out; and this experience brought him into close and educative contact with the great banking and commercial interests of the Near East. He was Commissioner of East Roumelia; British, Belgian and Dutch representative on the Council of Ottoman Debt (and afterwards its president); financial adviser to the Egyptian Government, and Governor of the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

LORD d'ABERNON seems therefore well equipped for dealing with the financial situation at Berlin, which has so far baffled the Allied Governments and bids fair to go on baffling them unless their requisitions are rearranged under such experienced and sensible advice as Lord d'Abernon bids fair to furnish. Quite extraordinary developments may come from this appointment which is said to have upset Lord Curzon. Britain's stationing a free-trader at Berlin as Ambassador is not apt to tickle the Millerand Government to death, since M. Millerand would crush by tariffs everything that military force has left of Germany. The manufacturing and trading interests of England, however, those who are interested in legitimate trade openly conducted and not in the thimblerigging of high finance, are aware that the fiscal policy of the French is as shortsighted and inimical to the rehabilitation of European commerce as their military policy. They know that Germany was England's best customer, and that she was also the great central market of Europe's commerce and finance. It will be interesting to find out how far these interests were influential in determining the appointment, apparently over the Foreign Minister's head, of so peculiarly well-equipped a representative as Lord d'Abernon. There is some dissatisfaction in Germany over the appointment, in that Lord d'Abernon has had so much to

do with the finances of countries dependent on Britain; the feeling is that the appointment puts Germany before the world in the light of a dependent nation.

EVERY penny invested in certificates during the next three months will be used to pay off our American debt; investors will have the satisfaction of knowing their money is being applied immediately to a purpose of the utmost national usefulness.

So says the British Government in big display-advertisements which are now appearing in the leading English newspapers. The last clause certainly promises the investor an uncommon treat. 'Tis doubtless an excellent piece of advice, on the whole, but, without claiming to possess more horse-sense than belongs to the average day-labourer at the end of an eight-hour shift, this paper thinks it knows a better way to reach the same desirable end. Our general idea is that a good way to save money is not to waste it. In other words, our fellow-sufferers in Britain would have to pay their precious Government a whole lot less of their hard-earned cash if they could somehow steer off the gentlemen in White-hall from their very expensive habit of "thinking imperially." Thus, by reason of the British Government's commitments in Palestine and Mesopotamia, the British military front now stretches more than 4000 miles from Cairo to Singapore. Naturally it costs a shilling or two to take care of all this mileage. In Palestine the Government is paying and feeding and clothing 23,000 men and in Mesopotamia another 70,000; and then, of course, all those tanks and things in Ireland cost money. On the whole, this paper feels that if it were to take upon itself the ungrateful task of giving advice to another lot of miserable sinners like ourselves it would speak up against buying those certificates to help the British Government pay its debt to America.

WITH one new battleship just launched, and seventeen more battleships and cruisers on the ways it is disconcerting to learn that there are 400 vacancies at Annapolis crying for young Farraguts who answer not. Many tentative reasons are given in the press-accounts for the general apathy towards what used to be considered a highly desirable opportunity for a young man: the vanishing lure of the naval career, the low remuneration of naval officers, and the excellent opportunities open to young men in other professions; the rigours of the entrance examinations and the exacting standards of the Naval Academy; and last and most significant, the general reaction against warlike activities. One candidate, says the *New York Times* account, backed down because he was offered a high salary in civil employment; another failed to pass the entrance examinations; still another yielded to his mother's persuasion not to enter a career which might ultimately take him to war; while a fourth who had already been to war decided that he "seen enough already." There are, no doubt, many other reasons. Perhaps some possible candidates prefer to remain on shore and take a chance on becoming Secretary of the Navy without ever even having to be sea-sick. The reasons for the vacancies are manifold and hypothetical, but there is one safe bet in the situation. Unless Mr. Daniels (or his Republican successor) can devise some way to make his ships automatic, they will have to stick close to their docks and never go to sea.

AN Englishman once said that when Parliament had nothing to do, it could always invent a new crime. The Legislature of Nebraska recently bestirred itself in an idle moment and passed a "foreign language law." The first case under it began 29 June, 1920, against a defendant named Meyer. This man's crime was that of teaching the German language in a parochial school. A good round term of imprisonment would be a splendid clincher for the accumulated evidence that we are a truly great people, worthy of leadership in world-affairs, with nothing petty, childish or spiteful about us,

and that our institutions are thoroughly and especially proof against Prussianization.

It is not surprising, in view of what has lately come out of Kansas, to learn that the officials of that very remarkable State have been beforehand in dealing with any I. W. W. agitators who may drift into the Kansas wheat fields this summer. They have posted in the wheat fields copies of an injunction issued by some State judge, forbidding I. W. W. members to advocate or practise their teachings in the State. This is simple and convenient: should the injunction be violated, the offender may be speedily disposed of by a sentence for contempt of court, for any term his Honour may see fit to impose. It is an ingenious method of depriving citizens of their Constitutional right to due process of law, and it will no doubt prove gratifying to the virtuous and politically orthodox soul of Kansas, of which Governor Allen is perhaps the archetypal form; but who should wonder if it induces in the sinful outsider a lively fear that the United States might become "one vast, awful Kansas"?

IF Sinn Fein is going in for such dangerous sport as capturing British generals when they go fishing, it had better be careful. It ought to know by now that most British generals are a far greater aid to liberty when they are free and going about their business, than when they are kept helpless in captivity. It was a great day for the Irish Republic when Lord French took up his residence in Dublin Castle and permeated the official world in Ireland with the dullness and obstinacy of the military mind. Consider too what General Dyer has done for the cause of Indian nationalism by his firing-party at Amritsar. It is credibly reported that during the war German soldiers were severely punished if ever they captured a British general. One is glad to hear that the Sinn Feiners are taking good care of their distinguished captive and that he has already written to his friends saying how he can be reached by mail. But President de Valera ought to discourage this misdirected and unintelligent zeal on the part of his followers. They might some day capture the Viceroy, and that would probably end the hopes of the Republic for good and all.

REALLY one can not affect to be surprised at the news that Senator Harding's first speech since his nomination is made into the recording horn of a phonograph. What could be more appropriate? A man whose political mind may most aptly be likened to a receptive waxen disk would naturally choose such a means for expressing his views. One can picture the scene: the experts from the talking-machine world, a secretary or two and the necessary publicity-man to describe the marvel to a listening world; and in the midst the Senator reading—whose purple passages?—from a neatly typewritten manuscript: America headed the forward procession of civil, human and religious liberty which ultimately will effect the liberation of all mankind. The Federal Constitution is the very base of all Americanism, the Ark of the Covenant of American liberty, the very temple of equal rights.

Soon this historic record will be twirling round and round in countless American homes, while citizens of both sexes and all ages listen in awed silence. From beginning to end, how inevitably it all suggests the well-known advertisement of His Master's Voice.

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## TOPICS OF THE DAY.

### BUSINESS VERSUS GENIUS.

AMERICAN literature is rapidly assuming the rôle that was played in the world by Russian literature before the war. That is to say, it is becoming a literature that derives its validity and strength from a new disposition to question accepted modes and ideas. It springs from an inner revolt, a restless disillusionment, a profound disharmony between the ordered regimentation of our daily lives and the secret promptings of our natures. It has in some of its most authentic recent manifestations, shown an equal tendency to be critical of the past and to rest its hopes only in a vague, mystical way upon the far future. Apart from the academic appraisals of those minds whose outlook is bounded by the vistas seen from college windows, and whose expression is trained only to the note of the official pronouncement, American literature has shown an increasing disposition to be critical of ideas; and this is a symptom which is not only of immense importance for the present, but for the future also. We must be increasingly conscious and critical of all old ideas, if we are ever to find out new ideas worthy of our expression.

Three writers dominated what may be called the adolescent period of our national existence; the period which opened with the gold-rush to California in 1849, which culminated in the Civil War, and which definitely closed with the outbreak of the European conflict in 1914. Of this period three men, widely divergent in outlook, in aim, and in accomplishment, were the chosen spokesmen. One of them was a poet: Walt Whitman. The two others were prose writers: Henry James and Mark Twain. These three men varied widely in their reaction to the national life of the time wherein they lived. Their reaction was conditioned in each case by the circumstances in which they grew to manhood; but the motivating force in each case was the same. It was the force which produced what Mark Twain himself called, the Gilded Age; the force of "big business," of unrestrained and individualistic industrial development.

The most recent appraisal of the life of Mark Twain, written by Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, has provided the reviewers with an easy means of misinterpretation. As the work is loosely cast in the form of a biography, and a biography, moreover, of an outstanding American figure of genius, those whose function it is merely to catalogue fine literature, may miss the point and say that the work has interest only in that it exaggerates the failure of Mark Twain's later years, at the expense of the earlier, and that it lays the whole blame for this failure entirely upon Mark Twain's wife and mother. Reviewers have indeed already said this; and yet it is precisely what the book does not do. It is not a biography in any accepted sense; the work in that department has already been done, and ably done, by Mr. Albert Bigelow Paine. Mr. Brooks deals wholly with ideas; his function is that of a critic, and his work is entirely philosophical, rather than historical or technical; the effort that he has displayed in showing us Mark Twain as he was, carries within it the larger effort to estimate the weight and direction of the social forces from which Mark Twain sprang. It is quite untrue to say that the entire cause of the undoing of Mark Twain's ability was either his wife or his mother; just as it would be untrue to say that the entire cause of his undoing was Mark Twain himself. A critic's business is to con-

cern himself even more with states than with individuals. In the view of sound criticism, the cause of Mark Twain's undoing was something far wider and more impersonal; it was the restless, shifting hankering for position and respectability which dominated the Gilded Age.

Mr. Brooks, then, establishes and applies in this country the method of criticism established in France by Sainte-Beuve and by Taine; the method which attempts to show a man as the product of a certain milieu, and as the mouthpiece of the ideas current in his time. This method is the direct reverse of the method of æsthetic appreciation established in England during the nineties by such men as Walter Pater and Arthur Symons. It does not primarily attempt æsthetic appreciation; when Mr. Brooks, for example, undertakes to write on any æsthetic phase, he is merely negatively ironic, as in his remark concerning Elmira: "Who does not know those august brick-and-stucco mansard palaces of the Middle States, those fountains on the front lawn that never played, those bronze animals with their permanent but economical suggestions of the baronial park?" This method of criticism proposes, rather, to lay the social structure of a particular period open to the bone, so as to show the disease at the base of it; and in the view of this criticism Mark Twain stands merely as the emblem of that structure, because he combined in his personality all its traits, its prodigality, its wide amateurishness, its refusal to take anything seriously, its inability to finish anything, its degradation of every spiritual ideal into some new and immediate means for obtaining practical material comfort. "Patience, conscience, economy, self-knowledge, all those humble traits of the wise and sober workingman which every mature artist is—where are we to look for them in Mark Twain's record?" asks Mr. Brooks; and we, with the memory of William Blake's remark that "Judgment is for States, never for individuals," may complete the question by implying that such things were not to be found in America, either, during Mark Twain's life—that indeed they are scarcely to be found here to this day.

So this critical method follows Mark Twain, that bundle of human impulses dropped into a seething, get-rich-quick epoch, from the scapegrace adventures of his boyhood to the period when life takes on power, purpose and direction for him, and he becomes a pilot; the one profession that he cared for so deeply that he took his pen-name from its practice, and to the end of his life longed to return to it. Then the Civil War which with its aftermath, shattered Whitman and drove Henry James into exile, comes, and the studious, well-dressed youth that had been a pilot becomes the rough, unshaven miner of Nevada. But even there, literature calls, and the *Enterprise* (inauspicious name) launches him on his career as writer. Then comes notoriety through the "Jumping Frog"; the Quaker City excursion, marriage and gentility—American commitments; the problem of how to keep up appearances when you are overspending your income and are already, three months before your marriage, \$22,000 in debt! Is it any wonder that under such circumstances "tell the truth or trump—but take the trick" becomes a maxim for ordinary life?

Yet all the while, underneath, there was something else in Mark Twain—a spark of that mysterious sublimation called "genius" which transforms many unfortunate individuals into sheer wrecks and failures, but drives a few to the summits of human thought and expression. Unfortunately for Mark Twain,

that genius had never been developed to maturity, and there was always facing him that dire necessity to "take the trick." So he drifted into the business, not of writing great satire and humour, but of producing cheap laughter, of playing up the obvious. Hence he became a popular idol in a country where the obvious is always accepted as the great. He alone was the spoilt prince of literature, while Whitman lived in obscure poverty in a Philadelphia suburb, and Henry James buried himself in England. Yet who can say that his genius was less than theirs? The first chapters of "Life on the Mississippi" and "Huckleberry Finn," which he dallied through eight years to write, are there to prove the contrary. Only these two books, and the terrible, revealing satire of "The Man Who Corrupted Hadleyburg" remain to set against volume on volume of failure! It is as if the stream of his genius, like that Great River on whose banks he was born, carried only rubbish-snags and driftwood along with it.

Sound and competent criticism, of which there is all too little current, criticism such as this, has the force of turning its subject-matter into a parable. In this case, the parable is addressed particularly to each of us who wish to make America a little better, warning us not to be deluded by material success, not to sell ourselves to the highest bidder. It is a parable needed to-day more than ever, when, after participating in the most tragic events in history, we may be only at the dawn of another and more horrible and more enervating Gilded Age.

#### THE ACHILLES' HEEL OF EMPIRE.

It probably did not occur to those British statesmen who so glibly incorporated the principle of the rights of small nations into the Allied offensive during the war, that they would one day find themselves hoist with their own petard. Diplomatically speaking, of course, there were no oppressed nationalities sighing for freedom from the yoke of any Allied belligerent. It was only the small nationalities under Germany, Austria, and Turkey that required emancipation at Allied expense. So the Entente busily went about promoting, through its diplomatic offensive, the same sort of rebellion in those countries as had taken place in Ireland in 1916, and producing a disaffection which had much to do with the final capitulation of the Central Powers.

All would have gone well had it been as clear to small nations as it was to Allied statesmen and a few internationalists that the rights of small nations were important only for Allied diplomatic purposes. The "liberation of oppressed nationalities" gave a pious purpose to the war, but proved somewhat disturbing at the peace conference, and, has so proved, in fact, ever since. The trouble was, as Mr. Wilson once observed at Paris, that all sorts of small nationalities who hadn't been on the list at all kept bobbing up before the peacemakers and demanding self-determination. The peacemakers acted with discrimination. They applied that principle to the small nations which seemed well placed to serve as barriers against bolshevism and against a revival of German or Austrian power, and sent the rest home to Dublin or Mecca or Cairo or Delhi or Seoul or wherever they came from.

The disturbing question, however, was not so easily disposed of. The Allies, whatever their intention, had legitimatized before public opinion the aspirations of small nationalities; and it is that fact which has given to the Irish question an entirely new aspect, calculated to prove disconcerting to British politicians. Ireland

did not fail to seize the advantage given her by the Allied diplomatic offensive, or to claim insistently her right to self-determination. What was good for Czecho-Slovakia, for Poland, for all the small Russian nationalities whose independence the Allies had found it expedient to recognize, was, be th' same token, good for Ireland, a country with a record of five hundred years under alien oppression. Not only have the Irish clamantly pressed their demands abroad; they have manoeuvred themselves at home into the position of a subject nation—a nation with its own government, expressive of the popular will and one hundred per cent effective—which is suffering under occupation by the army of a foreign Power, exactly as Belgium suffered under Germany. By quietly ignoring British governmental institutions and setting up, under the incubus of British military rule, a government which functions in every respect, while the King's government has become a dead letter, the Irish have established before the world their status as a nation and the *fait accompli* of responsible self-government.

Such is the present situation, and British politicians may not blink it. The Irish stage is set for civil war. The Ulster minority, under Carson, is waxing more and more uneasy as the forces for independence invade its sacred strongholds. The riots in Londonderry, which has been dominated by Orangemen from time immemorial, were probably due largely to the fact that a Sinn Fein-Nationalist coalition won the recent local elections. Sir Edward Carson has just added fuel to the flames by reverting to his pre-war threats to arm "our people" in case it should "become necessary, by reason of the inactivity of the Government to carry out the essential duties of government." The Government, on its part, finds itself in an unhappy dilemma. Although Mr. Lloyd George has declared that the authorities will resist any effort for Irish independence, the amount of danger in the situation is sufficient to guarantee that he will handle it rather gingerly. He knows that he would not have a united Empire back of a civil war in Ireland. Australia has repeatedly declared for Irish freedom; while neither Canada nor South Africa would be likely to get up much enthusiasm over a British effort to continue the notorious oppression of this small but stubborn nationality. The struggle would be between England and Ireland, then, with perhaps an element of dissatisfaction on the part of British labour into the bargain. Besides this, the effect of such a war abroad would be likely to prove depressing. In America, the Irish feeling is stronger than it has ever been; and, as Mr. Norman Thomas ably points out in a paper published elsewhere in this issue, it is a different kind of feeling. The Irish cause in this country is passing out of the hands of Tammany and the spiritual ilk of Tammany, into the hands of more idealistic leaders who see a free Ireland not as a miniature United States, a "happy hunting ground for machine-politicians and Irish-American captains of industry," but as a free commonwealth of free men, with an economic rather than a political basis of government. This is the Ireland for which there is so much sympathy to-day among thousands of Americans who accepted with enthusiasm, and failed to forget at the proper time, the Allied principle of self-determination.

A policy of force, then, without stint or limit, would scarcely seem the wisest course for Mr. Lloyd George to pursue. One would be tempted to hope that the Celt in him would lead him to some sensational stroke of statesmanship such as the application at home of his principle of self-determination. But Mr. Lloyd George is not alone. He is responsible to an English Cabinet and

Commons, and developments in Ireland are rapidly outpacing these slow-witted gentlemen. Organized labour, both in town and country, backed by the strength of the co-operative movement, is in a fair way to render superfluous all attempts to settle the question by political means. A striking proof of this new and formidable fact was forthcoming the other day in the columns of the London *Times*, which is by no means friendly to labour's poaching upon the politician's preserves. Reporting the proceedings of the recent special conference of the National Union of Railwaymen, the *Times* correspondent wrote thus:

[The Conference] was attended by all the members of the executive and about a hundred delegates from Ireland. Of the delegates some fifteen or twenty came from those parts of the North of Ireland which Unionists call Ulster, but as no suggestion has reached me that the discussion was anything but harmonious, I assume that these delegates from the Carson counties regard themselves as railwaymen first and Unionists last, if at all.

This is as heretical as putting religion above patriotism. For what can Mr. Lloyd George or any other politician hope to do with a situation where people consider their economic affiliations first and their political divisions afterward—"if at all"?

#### SCIENCE AND COMMON SENSE.

THE two do not necessarily go together; indeed, it is often the scientist and no one else who would profit most from the possession of that assessing and discriminating quality which, since antiquity, has been described by the term good, or common, sense. Even if we admit that the late war was hardly worth the price, we can still turn to excellent account some of its salutary by-products, and one of the most salutary was the illuminating discovery that scientists, intellectuals, professors, the men of light and leading, were fully competent to make just as big fools of themselves as the less learned fry; in fact, bigger. To not a few competent observers this discovery has been extremely painful, and some of them have gone so far as to suggest that the world would be better off and the ordinary man considerably happier, if modern education were thrown overboard, bag and baggage. Theoretically, we must confess, this proposition has considerable attractiveness; but as there is small chance of its being put into effect, any discussion of its advantages has approximately as much value as a nominating speech at a political convention. Whether we like them or not, we have got to put up with modern science and modern education, and we might as well make the best of them. Our chief concern, if we care a penny about any genuine humanism, is to see to it that we are not frightened or intimidated by them.

For the truth is we have got to do much more than merely put up with them. Every age seems to have its peculiar measure of superstitions and follies, and our own age, which we may make roughly coincident with the rise of machine-technology, has made science a fetish. It is probably true that the Middle Ages were priest-ridden, but that fact gives us no warrant for looking down upon them with pity. We are a little worse off, if anything, for where religious bigotry has collapsed we have replaced it with bigotry of a different kind. We are science-ridden; and it requires no great powers of perception to see that science rampant—rampant medicine in particular—is every bit as tyrannical, and is considerably more absurd than the arrogant religions of the past. As the ordinary man of all times and ages appears to have a congenital itch for something or somebody he

can bow down to and reverence, and as the ordinary man of this industrial era of the machine-shop and the motor-tractor appears to have found it increasingly difficult to bow down to and reverence the tribal god of a pastoral people (Thorstein Veblen has adroitly exposed this state of affairs), he has selected science for his ultimate source of authority. From the point of view of efficiency, increased production, and material wealth this conversion has considerable to be said in its favour, but from the point of view of the humanist, it is profoundly disquieting; precisely because it is more humiliating to see the human soul shiver before blue prints, laboratories, and technical experts than to see it shiver before a God of Vengeance and a future Hell. Unfortunately the war did not cure the ordinary man of this habit. The spectacle of the scientist judging ultimate and larger questions of public policy with every bit as much recklessness and stupidity as he himself, has failed to impress him.

But to the humanist who wishes to resist the contemporary irrational mob-fear before the fetish of science, the spectacle does suggest certain corrective reflections. These reflections spring really from a proper understanding and definition of intelligence. Perhaps the saddest of popular fallacies is that which, for want of a better name, one may call the compensatory fallacy, the naïve belief that a man may be genuinely excellent in one thing and horribly stupid in everything else, the specialist *par excellence*, and yet, on the whole, decidedly merit being called an intelligent man. This is an age of specialisms, too often unrelated specialisms, and there is even something disreputable, like jack-of-all-trades, in the very phrase, "the all-round man," although as a matter of fact the most valid definition of the all-round man would be the intelligent man. For the hardest point to make clear to the popular mind is that above a certain minimum point specialization *per se* is no criterion of intelligence whatsoever; that a man may be a first-rate specialist in a particular field and yet be fundamentally an ignoramus.

The ordinary citizen seems to see this point clearly enough when it is exemplified in such a case as that of the eight-year-old Polish boy who defeats twenty French chess experts simultaneously, yet who longs to ride on the blue pigs at the fair at Neuilly. But when it comes to the professor, or the instructor with a degree, the application of the parallel never takes place. Yet the bald fact is that our universities shelter many well-crammed, narrowly disciplined, expert specialists who by any proper intelligence-rating come perilously near becoming morons. They do incalculable harm to the impressionable youths who are taught by them, and of course they never really advance their own particular field by original work. One of the most important problems facing modern university-administration is the problem of preventing these essentially unintelligent men from getting technical training.

The waste of intelligence in the modern world, the misapplication and misuse of it, the fostering of unintelligent passivity, is really appalling. The ratio of the highly intelligent to the less intelligent and merely stupid, is roughly one to ten; the real problem of modern education is to discover ways and means to make that ten per cent get the technical training. For then, being intelligent men and not mere specialists, they will be in a position to see their own specialty in its proper perspective, to realize that its methodology may be wholly inapplicable to another set of facts, to

relate it in a humanistic way to the rest of the body of knowledge. All first-rate original, creative, or valuable intellectual work is done in this fashion and no other.

What one has to come back to again and again is the simple proposition that a high degree of intelligence means a high power of correlation. But even this statement is open to misunderstanding. A high degree of intelligence is not merely the ability to correlate everything in terms of one methodology; the attempt to strait-jacket all the facts of this world and the next in terms of one method is not intelligence at all, it is merely ingenuity. It is, of course, the favourite game of modern philosophers, but a more fundamentally ignorant body of men than modern philosophers it would be hard to find in a year's travel. To correlate means strictly that; to put in intelligible terms the relations between several sets of facts, to assess a number of different methodologies in terms of common sense and wide judgment. It is no accident that during the war in England—and the phenomenon was to a certain extent paralleled in other countries—the physicists and chemists were on the whole intolerant and harsh in their attitude toward Germany and the war in general, whereas the biologists, the botanists, and anthropologists, again on the whole, were tolerant and enlightened. This might have been expected almost *a priori*. The set of facts with which chemists and physicists customarily deal, requires a much less flexible and much more unimaginative methodology than the set of facts coming within the range of those studying living organisms and human beings. Again in modern psychology, without attempting to raise any thorny epistemological problems, it is fairly obvious to common sense that the scientist is dealing with two essentially different sets of facts: on the one side, the physiological and chemical reactions of the human body; on the other, the life of consciousness to which these reactions are so intimately related. Yet much unadulterated balderdash and sophistical humbug is written on psychology, just because of the frantic attempts to cram both sets of facts within the framework of one methodology. Unending are the disquisitions on consciousness being just one aspect of "response" seen from a different angle, and so on. The desire for a monistic view in a jangled, pluralistic world must be very deep in all of us; for it can drive even intelligent men to the topmost heights of absurdity. A good deal of modern psychological writing is pathetic proof of how deep that desire is.

The proposition that the real criterion of intelligence is in the degree of power of correlation is hardly a new one; but it needs to be restated with considerable emphasis just now when science was never subdivided into so many specialisms and when we have allowed the perfectly healthy concept of the all-round man to acquire a mysterious stigma. Other ages were more sane. Aristotle, Leonardo da Vinci, and Shakespeare were probably regarded by their contemporaries as fairly level-headed, all-round men; yet that fact can hardly be said to have tarnished their intellectual reputation. Today we mock at the all-round man simply because it is so devilishly difficult to be one. The temptations to fly off into erratic specialization are too multifarious and too compelling. Yet in his heart no one knows better than the scientist himself that no really creative work will be done by him even in his own field until he can rise above his specialty and survey it objectively; until, in a word, he can apply common sense to his technical problem when the technical resources are exhausted.

The humanist has a perfectly valid case for his assertion of the supremacy of the all-round point of view; and never ought he to press it more boldly than to-day. He ought not to be timid about asserting that if a man has learned really to think straight on one subject, the chances are ten to one that he will think straight on most others, for the essence of thinking straight is always the same. Now, more than ever before, we ought to be especially wary of the specialist who makes an egregious ass of himself nearly every time he expresses any opinion on any subject other than his own. It is an odds bet that if we examined such a person more carefully, we should find that in his specialty he was doing his work solely by rote and formula; rote that he has unintelligently assimilated and formula that he does not fully comprehend.

#### COMMUNITY OPERA.

LIKE the singing-birds, man's impulse to sing is dictated by his feelings; hence simple, vocal music has a powerful emotional influence on all mankind, whether in the lowest or highest state of culture. In the drama of Æschylus and Sophocles, music was the chief emotional factor associated with religion; but in the dramas of Euripides, music was lowered to the function of mere entertainment. Among the Romans it was purely and simply a means of entertainment. In the early Christian Church, music developed its dual character as an element of religion and of art. In the miracle and morality plays of the Middle Ages music and the drama developed their inherent powers simultaneously. This ancient union was dissolved, or loosely continued, in the new type of spoken drama presented in Spain and England. But in Italy the Greek union of these dual forms was rejuvenated in a type of music-drama which reached its perfect realization in the music-drama of Richard Wagner.

Italian opera was conceived and executed as an aristocratic entertainment; whereas the spoken drama of Spain and England exercised its influence on the people at large. Italian opera in its costly aristocratic aspect became the favourite form of entertainment at all the courts of Europe. This exclusive aspect has been perpetuated up to the present day at the Metropolitan Opera House, supported as it is by American millionaires and Wall Street financiers.

Wherever opera has become a form of art for the people, or the community at large, it has done so by methods diametrically opposed to those involved in Italian opera. By the employment of modest and simple means, popular opera has wedged its way between the aristocratic form and the spoken drama. By the application of popular means, such as folk songs, untrained singers, simple scenery, limited orchestra-material, etc., it was possible for opera, as a popular form of art, to assert its educational influence among the different nationalities of Europe. In England "The Beggar's Opera," built on popular songs of the day, was the first successful venture to counteract the Italian opera's influence in London. In France the introduction of vaudeville, a play with popular songs interspersed, laid the foundation for French popular opera. In Germany the *Singspiel* or song-play, was the popular factor which undermined the Italian opera, and Weber's "Freischütz," based chiefly on music of a folk-song character, laid the scheme for German national opera perfected by Richard Wagner. In Russia, Glinka and Moussorgsky established on the basis of Russian folk-songs a distinct individual type of national opera in opposition to the Italian opera flourishing at the Court theatres.

It is necessary to conceive clearly the two phases of opera as an aristocratic and popular form of entertainment, before any conclusion can be reached as to the possibility or impossibility of community-opera in America. The conditions prevailing at present in America are similar to those which called forth in European countries a new form of opera for the people, in contrast to the Italian type. The Metropolitan Opera House in New York City is in every way a more expensive establishment than similar institutions in London, Paris, Milan, Berlin or Vienna. The artistic standard here realized, demands an expenditure of fabulous sums. It is said that each performance costs \$10,000. This fact alone precludes every possibility of Italian opera and its type from ever becoming a community-institution in America. This country must cut loose from this type of expensive entertainment by inventing its own form of opera on popular lines, just as France, Germany and Russia have done by exploiting their own native means, no matter how humble and unpretentious. This necessity is emphasized by Krehbiel in his book on the opera, in these words:

In the nature of things the United States must soon follow the example of France, Germany and Russia and establish a national opera, or opera which, like the drama, shall use the vernacular. From German opera to opera in English, the step is possible; from Italian opera, dependent on composition with no consonance with the dramatic taste of the American people and the present time, the step is impossible.

This means that American opera, as a national product, has no future unless we discard the type of grand opera now provided by the Metropolitan Opera House. No community in the country can have at its disposal the artistic elements, such as famous singers, extravagant costumes and scenery, a high-salaried orchestra and conductors, and a large well-trained chorus. These features are necessary to satisfy the jaded taste of the wealthy New York opera-public. But the New York public is not the American public; and upon this fact must be based the future of opera in America—community opera, as an enjoyable, elevating factor in the entertainment of the masses.

The universal, popular love of music is the guarantee that a type of music-drama, song-play, or opera in its best aspect, will find popular favour if presented to the people in an acceptable form. This form must discard all essentials of grand opera of the Italian type. Simplicity of subject and matter must be the first consideration; the chief factor must be singable, interesting and charming music, music of the people, folk-songs, or simple music as readily comprehended. It must be music for the people, by the people, music that arouses fraternity and sympathy, music of a type which awakens and stimulates the best impulses of the people.

In America the war has affected two popular arts in particular; the drama and music. In this country the spoken drama has suffered a decided set-back in favour of moving-picture drama, but music has received an extraordinary advancement by the same influence all over the country. Music has been found a most desirable medium to supply emotional elements lacking in the film-plays. Every moving-picture house of any standing now employs an orchestra of from fifteen to twenty-five musicians. In New York City the foremost of them have a regular symphony orchestra of forty men, and one house has a grand orchestra of eighty musicians and a chorus of sixty. The presence of an orchestra in every city and town

of any size thus supplies the most important factor hitherto lacking in the smaller cities to make community-opera possible. Every other element needed can be furnished by almost any community. How then could these favourable conditions be employed to promote a community-opera in the cities and towns of the country?

There are three factors exerting a local influence which could be used in promoting community opera. First, the moving-picture theatres. These have at their disposal all the elements required to exploit this new form of music-drama, viz: the orchestra, the singers, the stage-manager, musical-director, and complete working material for its production. The moving-picture house is even better equipped than the regular opera-houses for the exploitation of an entirely new and effective phase of art in the combination of the opera and film. Second, the musical profession. As community-opera is a popular entertainment, the musicians of a community are chiefly concerned in its successful realization. Their influence in the community as teachers, organists, or chorus-conductors would make them, apparently, the natural promoters of this popular movement. Third, the community itself. In every community there are enthusiastic music-lovers who are at the same time public-spirited citizens. One individual of this type may arouse in a community a general enthusiasm for a popular activity of this order. If local conditions do not permit a highly ambitious attempt at a community-opera, there may still be at hand ample means for a play with music. Most towns have a local literary light; but if no local poet or dramatist is ready to try his hand at an original work, some play may be selected, as well as the music for it if no musician in the community is capable of supplying original music.

These various elements are usually found in varying degrees of development in every community; but the practical application of such musical and literary talent to a high form of art is still awaiting the American initiative. The community-spirit is awake, but at present is confined to the singing of songs, or to pageants. Community-opera aims at a more intimate art, more subtle in its appeal, and this must be achieved through the close union of drama and music. No matter how unpretentious such an attempt may be, a beginning would stimulate to a higher standard by procuring opportunities to the young playwright, the poet, the composer, the singer, the actor, stage-manager, conductor, scene-painter, orchestra-players. In fact, the organization of a community-opera would establish an institute of art in every locality. There is no reason why community-opera should not be made a successful local undertaking almost wherever a well-organized moving-picture theatre exists.

One very important point must be considered; and that is the lack of one-act opera, or song-plays, available. Here is a grand opportunity for our American playwrights and composers. The time is at hand when the moving-picture houses must seek variety in their film-plays; and as the houses are already equipped with orchestras and sometimes with choruses, there is every prospect that managers will decide on one-act operas or song-plays as the most desirable novelty. It is this prospect that should encourage the local musicians and musical enthusiasts to organize community-opera clubs in their locality to co-operate with the forces of the local moving-picture theatre. All the conditions, if rightly used, are favourable to producing, in time, a national opera. Every nationality of the world is here with its untapped riches of folk-

music, giving us a mass of characteristic musical material not found in any single European nation. Properly using such a quantity of valuable musical material, it would be strange, indeed, if an altogether new and original type of American opera would not in time be the result.

#### A GRAY EVENING IN GREENWICH VILLAGE.

It was a gray evening. One can not go abroad much in New York either by day or night, without reflecting that Manhattan is an island in more than one sense. It is as if humanity had been marooned on this island and left to its own resources. Recognizing its situation it fell to valiantly, and constructed streets and factories and tenements. It assembled vast congeries of people. It built skyscrapers. It burrowed underneath the ground in subways. It nerved the vast fabric with electricity and the telephone. So that now the island raises a formidable structure of man-made contrivances that seems curiously unique, isolated, and outside the order of nature. Across the river the Palisades grow green in spring and yellow and crimson in autumn. But the city can not change the gray of its concrete. It has lost the clue to the seasons, and can only strive fretfully by day and dream bad dreams by night, waiting some mythical rescuer who will lead it by the hand back into the harmony of nature from which it has strayed. Yet every now and then, especially in springtime, there comes an evening when a white mantle of mist wraps the gaunt bones of the city so that it may find a fugitive grace and receive at least temporary absolution from the sin of its materialism.

Just such a miracle was being wrought on this particular evening. Rain had fallen, and as I emerged from my friend's house I breathed happily of the sweetened and purified air. Passing a church, I marvelled at its new aspect of beauty, where religion still lingered in the softened lines of its arch and the lift of its tower. Rounding the corner into Sheridan Square I observed that the mist was merciful even to the frightfulness of certain recent architectural innovations. The street lamps were blurred and friendly. Indistinct figures of men and women hurried in and out of the side streets like agreeable water beetles, contributing to the illusion of a city no longer monstrous and desolate, but a mystery full of warm human implications. On such an evening, I reflected, one can believe in romance, one can have faith in youth and art and endeavour, one can believe—almost—in Greenwich Village.

It was nearly eight o'clock and I suddenly realized that I had not dined. Coincident with that realization there awoke in me a memory dating back to a remote period before the war—a most fragrant and entrancing memory. Quickly getting my direction I broke into a brisk trot, while before me there hovered the jocund wraith of a brown casserole containing rice mingled judiciously with cheese and sending forth a luring aroma. For forty cents, prompted my memory, one could have the entire contents of that casserole, and with it went an excellent variety of home-made raisin bread.

Outside the restaurant I paused. It was the same place undoubtedly, although from within came certain suspicious sounds. "Jazz," whispered my canny better judgment, "don't chance it!" But that brown casserole pleaded irresistibly. Inside the door I stumbled over a young man who would have been rather tough looking even if he hadn't been dressed up like a gypsy. "Hello," I said, "what's this—a fancy dress party?" The young man smiled fishily and made what he doubtless supposed to be a hospitable gypsy gesture. My heart sank, but I continued on in to the inner room which I remembered as the erstwhile habitat of the brown casserole. Weaving my way between the tables I collided with a tall, filmy-eyed youth who was brandishing in his right hand a piece of pie, which his thumb held firmly clasped to the plate. He was addressing a chubby and short-haired young lady whose blue eyes gazed admiringly up at him. "I am so glad to know that you too are int'rested in mediæval vice," said the young man.

Sitting down at a table, I beckoned to a nearby gypsy who came forward and presented a grimy menu-card. It was intentionally and elaborately misspelled. Why? Because it is the instinct of commercial parasitism to pervert and make trivial everything it touches. The image of that casserole of rice went out in gloom. Without doubt it too had been debauched. If an establishment does not respect the English language it certainly will not respect food, I reasoned. I

ordered roast beef and it proved to be, if anything, tougher than the face of the gypsy who served me. Also, the bill was a dollar and a half plus fifteen cents war tax and the glass of cider which I ordered cost thirty-five cents plus three cents war tax. There was of course no wine to be had. Probably one was supposed to get drunk on the orthographic outrage of that misspelled menu-card or go into a sort of wood-alcohol stupor from listening to the vile music. Jazz was supplied by three frowsily costumed roustabouts who respectively thumped a piano, blew on a horn and beat a drum, and one could dance without additional charge if one wanted to.

Instead I contented myself with watching the dancers. Harmless, rather pathetic young people they were for the most part. They should have been dancing on a village green somewhere and joyously practicing either virtue or vice without being particularly "int'rested" in either. But these people were incapable of anything so positive. They were the typical anaemic *froleurs* and *froleuses* of the metropolis, and they came and sat in this rat-hole and paid exorbitant prices for bad food and worse music because they were hungry and knew of nothing better than these husks to fill them.

I paid my bill and departed. The gypsy at the door wished me good night. I paused in the street to invoke the gypsy's curse on him and on all his house and on all the other fraudulent dens of Greenwich Village. With two or three other hungry men to help it would have been a pleasure to have banged those gypsies' heads together and reduced the paraphernalia of their establishment to its constituent kindling.

The mist was still thick over the city, but illusion had fled. A poor city indeed, I thought, with so many eager barterers and so little of the spirit to barter with. The Greenwich Village devil is sick. But instead of turning saint, he has decided to become a business man. He has sought the golden mean of profit, and as James Stephens has said, it is made of tin.

JAMES RORTY.

#### IRELAND AND THE WORLD'S PEACE.

WHENEVER the Irish question comes up for discussion a large section of American liberal and radical opinion is at once affected by every manifestation of the most profound indifference. Yet here it is—a standing challenge to the sincerity of all protestations of belief in nationality and self-determination and an ever present menace to the world's peace. Millions of our fellow citizens of Irish blood are concerned about the problem of Ireland with an intensity far exceeding their keenest interest in any other single public question. Within the last few months these Irish Americans have subscribed over \$10,000,000 for the bonds of the Irish Republic; they have been one of the strongest factors in defeating the Versailles Treaty. To them loyalty to America—and they are loyal to the core—means no friendship with Britain.

Just now the Irish movement in the United States, hitherto united, is rent asunder. Judge Cohalan of New York, "boss" of the Friends of Irish Freedom, is sharply at odds with President de Valera. The trouble came to a head when President de Valera as the representative of Ireland urged the Republican Convention in Chicago to declare explicitly in favour of the recognition of the Irish Republic without intervention, while all that Judge Cohalan and his supporters asked for was a resolution of sympathy with Irish independence. But the division runs deeper than would appear from the incident in Chicago. In the minds of many Americans and Irish Americans, President de Valera has come to symbolize a very different ideal for the Irish movement from that which is acceptable to the followers of Judge Cohalan. Behind all the problems of Irish-American policy and strategy, lie such fundamentals as the nature of the Irish State whose freedom is being sought and the method by which that freedom is to be secured. Two opposed tendencies have become sharply manifest of

late, and which of these is to prevail is a matter of some importance even to those Americans who are temperamentally little interested in Irish or Irish-American affairs.

Let us look first at Irish freedom as the Cohalan-American group seems to understand the term. It may fairly be summed up in the phrase often seen and heard at Irish meetings, "Ireland wants what America's got." That is to say, Ireland is to become a bourgeois republic with little Tammany Halls of its own, and plenty of native job-holders and grafters to take the place of the British variety. In other words, the British ruling class in Ireland is to yield its political and, perhaps, its economic power to Irish-born bureaucrats and captains of industry. Ireland is to be made independent that it may become the happy hunting-ground for machine-politicians and Irish-American business men who in prosperous partnership are to exploit the island's natural resources so long neglected under British control. The leaders who seek to realize this ideal are masters of the political game, are not lacking in personal ambition and are richly endowed with a sentimental affection for Ireland. Over against these qualifications these leaders possess but little vision, moral courage or true appreciation of what freedom really means; many of them are identified with the most corrupt forces in American politics; they are the creatures of the reactionary interests, and serve in legislatures, courts, and police forces as the unscrupulous tools of the worst enemies of freedom in America. They may, indeed, fairly be called "professional Irishmen" whose chief concern, first and last, is their own advancement. Even the best of them care more for freedom in Dublin than for freedom in New York. They will render eloquent homage to James Connolly as an Irish martyr, but not a word will they say for James Larkin, Connolly's friend and fellow-worker and one of the creators of the Irish labour-movement; but then, Connolly was shot by the British authorities for armed rebellion, while Larkin was only sent to State's prison for from five to ten years for no overt act but simply for expressing a belief in communist theories.

It is, of course, hardly to be expected that men who are blind to what liberty is, have no vision of what Irish freedom may mean to the world, should have any constructive ideas for freeing Ireland. They never vouchsafe to any audience a single idea as to how Ireland is to receive "what America's got." Armed intervention by the United States is seldom openly preached, though in some quarters such a policy is by no means unfavourably regarded. Indeed, time and again I have heard speeches which seemed to me far more inspired by hate of Britain than love of Ireland. These Irish leaders recognize imperialism only if it flies the British flag—just as some of the rest of us knew it only when it was Prussian. Not from this sort of leadership can we expect to see Ireland's freedom coming as part of a world-wide struggle against imperialism.

But an element of sinister import in the situation lies in the fact that half unconsciously the Cohalan leadership drifts towards war with Britain. An apt illustration of this fact occurred recently when President de Valera expressed on the part of his people a statesmanlike willingness for an agreement with the British Government whereby a free Ireland would give guarantees to England that Irish soil should never be used by any foreign foe against the peace of England.

Immediately the leaders of the Cohalan group bit-

terly denounced the Sinn Fein leader, yet it was these same men a few months before who had successfully blocked explicit recognition of the Irish Republic at the great Race Convention in Philadelphia and who are now posing as "moderates" against de Valera's "extremism." In short, some of these men, rather than have the Irish question speedily settled, seem to be willing enough to allow it to drag along interminably to the end of time. Better far, in their view, to have a live issue on which to ride into power in American politics, than have Ireland free at last and content and at peace with England.

Of course, there may be some Irish-Americans who are so ignorant of world-affairs as actually to believe that one fine day Uncle Sam will be ready and willing to go out like some gallant knight to rescue the fair Kathleen-ni-Houlihan from the clutches of the wicked giant, John Bull. These naïve gentlemen will have learned so little from the world war that they will not see how, in a life and death struggle between British and American imperialisms, not only Ireland but all humanity itself would be ground in the dust. As a matter of stubborn fact, as most Irish politicians know well enough, America will not fight Britain to free Ireland any more than Britain fought Germany to free Belgium. But they know, also, that Ireland's manifest wrongs, like Belgium's, may furnish the popular mind with the final justification for what would be an essentially imperialistic struggle. For I should like to say in these columns while yet I may without causing the *Freeman* to lose its mailing privilege, that if capitalistic imperialism endures much longer in England and America, it is all too probable that inevitable rivalries among the commercial and financial interests, coupled with the psychology which makes it impossible for any great imperial Power to brook a near and formidable rival, will lead to a war between the English-speaking peoples. Just as in 1914 Germany's undeniable crimes made it easy for British imperialists to persuade their people into a war against Germany as a war against militarism and imperialism, so England's crimes, particularly in Ireland, will be used to get popular support for a bloody struggle against British imperialism. And when it is all over, the wretched survivors of the conflict, just like ourselves today, will awake to find that they fought not against a united imperialism but against the imperialism of one nation in the interests of its rival.

If this were the only aspect of the Irish situation the outlook would indeed be dark. But in the minds not only of Irishmen, but of their American kin, another very different view of the nature of the future Irish State is forming. Those thoughtful Irishmen who best know America are in their hearts resolved that a free Ireland shall not be an imitation of the American State. The land and industrial programme of conservative Sinn Feiners is far more liberal than anything the typical Irish-American "boss" would stand for, while the principles and platform of the Irish Labour party would be banned by Mr. Attorney General Palmer and his like as pure and unadulterated bolshevism. A young Irishman just over from Ireland told me the other day that the most disappointing moment of his life was when he discovered the real nature of some of the Irish-American "bossism." A free Ireland meant nothing to him unless it meant free Irishmen. In his conception of the State the co-operative movement, the labour-union, and the old traditional culture of Ireland are more truly a part of the national being than any Parliament, sitting in Dublin. The Ireland for which the flower of her

youth is suffering and dying is coming to share the international labour vision of James Connolly; it is learning something of that profound and upbuilding theory of the life of a people which "A. E." so eloquently preaches, it sees with Aodh de Blacam that the traditions of the old Irish civilization and the ethics of the great Catholic schoolmen are far more in accord with a true co-operative commonwealth than they are with a cheap little bourgeois republic dominated by local capitalists of the type pilloried in A. E.'s famous letter on behalf of the Irish transport-strikes. The new-born Irish nationalism opposes imperialism, not because it is British, but because it is imperialism; it joins hands with the Hindu, the Egyptian, the Negro, with all men struggling to be free. Professing no theoretical pacifism, it has by force of circumstance been obliged to seek out other methods of emancipation than those of war. Few of us realize as yet to what extent the new spirit of Irish Republicanism has pioneered in the successful use of passive resistance or at least non-military resistance. By these methods, conscription was averted during the world war; by hunger striking in English prisons the conscience of Britain and America has been aroused, and now by a general strike Irish workers are dealing a body blow at the military power of Britain. By the ballot the agencies of local government have been captured by the electorate and turned against Dublin Castle so that to-day, in many respects, the Republican Government of Ireland is a more real and powerful factor in the daily life of the people than is the rule of Dublin Castle though it has all the army and navy of Britain at its command. The situation as it now stands brings the sincerity of British labour to the acid test. All in vain will be its idealistic programmes of reconstruction: it loves empire more than liberty. But there are signs that British workers are beginning to understand the true meaning of Ireland's struggle. Armed rebellion they might be willing to fight but they are loath to scab on fellow-workers, or to kill passive resisters in cold blood. That the British Miners, Railwaymen and Transport-Workers—the Triple Alliance—consider refusing to ship arms to Ireland or ordering a general strike in her behalf, is a victory for the Irish cause more immediately serviceable than any so far won in America. If the Irish people can persevere in their present policy of passive resistance, despite almost intolerable provocation, they have a far greater chance of winning through than they can hope to have by the method of rebellion. All mankind will be in their debt for ever if they can thus show the world how freedom may be won without the way of war.

It is on this understanding of the Irish problem that the people of America are called upon to serve Ireland not by any talk of war but by sheer pressure and the force of public opinion. We can stop the financing of British imperialism directly and indirectly with American money. We can make Ireland a test of international good faith and her freedom a symbol of sane internationalism. A recent meeting in the historic hall of Cooper Union, New York, proved that American labour has already partially caught the vision. At that meeting, American workers called on their English brothers to oppose their Government's imperialism in Ireland just as they had opposed it in the case of Russia and Poland.

Furthermore—and it is this profound truth which American liberals fail to understand—our own American liberty will be mightily served by this struggle for Irish liberty. For how can we endorse a plea to the

English government to release Irish political prisoners while we allow our Government to keep Jim Larkin and 'Gene Debs and a host of political heretics in jail. We do not dare to come before the judgment bar of the world's opinion as the advocates of justice in Ireland so long as we are unwilling to examine our own treatment of the Negro. Neither may we condemn England's treatment of Ireland while the record of our own attitude towards Mexico, Haiti, and Santo Domingo stands as it is.

Heretofore the rank and file of the Irish-Americans has tended to be overly conservative in American political and economic life. This loyalty to America, as they have conceived it, has been betrayed by their political leaders who have urged that Irish freedom depended upon Irishmen here winning favour in America from the powers that be. These bosses have tried to make an Irish revolution appear to Americans as a respectable middle-class affair carried out strictly on the lines of 1776—and after all these years they have got nowhere. But the Irish everywhere, in Ireland, in this country, and in all parts of the British Empire, are awakening. There are few movements in America more hopeful, more richly charged with human liberty and happiness, than this awakening. Will American liberals and radicals help it or destroy it? It is time for them to face facts. To shirk the Irish question or to dismiss it as none of our business is not to avert trouble but to invite it. To accept or condone British imperialism is to do an injury, not a service, to real Anglo-American friendship. A nominal peace secured by an alliance of Anglo-American tory governments resting upon the exploitation of the larger part of the world is as ignoble as it is insecure. To bid us, as does Mr. Owen Wister, to forget our ancient grudge against England at the price of perpetual hatred of Germany and contempt for Ireland, is the way not of peace but of the sword.

Unless the peoples of England and America base their friendships upon an act of simple justice to Ireland even as a symbol of their desire for peace and good-will among the peoples of the earth we are of all men most miserable. For in choosing the way of continued imperialism we doom our Western civilization to its death in a catastrophic war.

NORMAN THOMAS.

#### THE FAILURE OF LIBERAL IDEALISM.

THERE is much in common between the period America is passing through to-day and the epoch in which the Federal Constitution was formed. In both cases the people lacked adequate knowledge with which to meet the problems of their time; and now as then, their attention has not been directed to objects of real importance. Our Constitution emphasizes the mechanism of government. Its framers were much concerned with the fall of Rome and the failure of Athenian democracy, but they gave little thought to those economic fundamentals upon which prosperity depends. It is often said that the financial provisions in the Constitution were due to Hamilton's foresight, but it may be doubted that he saw further than the rest. Freedom of commerce was secured because no one deemed it important enough to be worth opposing. Each colony traded directly with foreign nations; inland commerce was negligible, largely because of the lack of roads. The provision against taxes on exports shows the type of trade that was then considered important. Had the Constitution been framed in 1830, the new opposition to free commerce would have forced some other solution. It

was by a happy accident, therefore, and not through forethought, that our great Republic was started on the right track. But evil accidents are as likely to happen as good ones; we can not expect that luck will always be on our side. A course plotted in accordance with our knowledge of what the future may bring—limited as that knowledge is—will serve us better than dependence on blind chance.

Where can one find a lucid statement of the economic problems which the American people face to-day? The League of Nations is at best a political mechanism, and discussion of it is reminiscent of the epoch during which the Constitution was formed. Our conscious interests are still in politics, race-rivalries, and national boundaries. Yet these problems are of minor importance by comparison with the neglected background of economic conditions.

The only worthy discussion of these conditions is that contained in Keynes's "Economic Consequences of the Peace," but even here the content of the book does not correspond to its title. The personalities and failures of the peace conference make interesting reading, but after all, such reading does not take one very far towards solutions which somehow must be found. Moreover, Mr. Keynes's remedies are inadequate. To reduce the victors' claims against Germany is no cure for present ills. The losses of the war, perhaps three hundred billion dollars, must be paid by some one. To reduce Germany's share of the burden is to increase that of some one else. Nor would the liquidation of the inter-Allied debt improve the present situation. The United States Government is neither demanding payment nor collecting interest just now. Such debts create no present burden, and are in no way the source of present distress. The evils of the war cut too deep to be healed by a mere exchange of paper. Real solutions must carry with them industrial transformations which will re-create the destroyed wealth.

Before the war Europe had an industrial system shaped by two centuries' growth. Populations had been re-located at points of industrial advantage. The lowlands were developed at the expense of the uplands; wherever coal was abundant cities grew; commercial ports increased in importance. But the boundary lines set up by the Versailles treaty attempt to alter all this. Generally speaking, the upland races were friends of the Allies; therefore they have been raised to the status of nationhood. To bring population back to the uplands, to take industry from the regions of coal and iron, to emphasize race-advantage instead of economic advantage, is to reduce the productivity of Central Europe by perhaps fifteen per cent. As the surplus never was more than ten per cent, the change destroys the basis on which highly developed modern industry rests.

In France we see this tendency in detail. France has had a stationary population for two centuries, for the reason that there are no great modern resources within her borders. France is for the most part a plain about 1200 feet above the ocean. This gave her an advantage when the interests of the civilized world were mainly agricultural; but modern industry has steadily passed beyond her borders and has become established on the lowland plains near the ocean and near the sources of coal and iron. To reverse this movement is the constant endeavour of French statesmen. But if they are to succeed, industry must be carried away from ports and coal-fields and lifted a thousand feet, up to the old level on which it thrrove five hundred years ago.

Before the Thirty Years' War, the centre of German industry was in Bohemia, whence it has gradually been pushed over to the plains of north Germany, which were unused at that time. To this shifting of industry, coupled with a change in food due to the introduction of the potato, the rise of Prussia may be attributed; for the growth of Prussia was the inevitable consequence of tendencies which can not be reversed without a transformation of national surplus into deficit. All this is true of France, with additional evils due to a bad financial policy. Even before the war, the French government was piling up a debt due to an excess of expenditure over income. The war has transformed a difficult situation into an impossible one. France to-day owes about thirty-five billion dollars against an estimated property-value of seventy billions. The debt of France actually equals the value of her capital goods. Values are of two sorts: the goods, material, machinery, buildings, etc., by which production is carried on; and the agricultural lands, city real-estate, railroad-franchises, terminal-facilities and numerous private rights which share in the revenue produced by labour and capital. In every advanced nation this latter group of values is as great as the capital used in production, and thus makes a great part of the estimated wealth. France may go on as she has gone this year, spending a billion francs more than her revenue, but in time the limit will be reached and then—disaster.

When we in this country attempt to measure our European obligations, we confuse two distinct problems; the relief of urgent physical distress, and the rehabilitation of destroyed European industry. Thinking of the treaty and a distant world-peace, we have neglected the relief of millions of people whom it was our plain duty to help. The expenditure of five hundred million dollars to prevent the sweep of disease and starvation in the war-areas would have built for us a monument of national glory; but to throw billions away in useless rehabilitation-projects is not merely waste, it is a crime. If European statesmen want to put industries on the tops of mountains instead of in valleys; if they want to make Prague a seaport instead of Hamburg; they should do it at the expense of European exchequers, and thereby all concerned may learn a needed lesson. Industry can be profitable only when it is properly located and in the right hands. Let those who consent to such unintelligent management pay the bill; not us.

Our real concern, however, should be with the American situation, which calls for careful handling if we are to avoid the errors into which Europe is falling. A sound analysis can not begin with war conditions, or with the easy assumption that our difficulties are temporary and due to war-costs. The war merely brought to a head certain forces that had long been active, forces that would have produced the same results even if no war had come. Thus the present writer predicted an epoch of high prices twenty years before it set in. The two main causes of our former cheap prices were the low cost of agricultural produce, resulting from the opening of the great West, and the discovery of ore-beds and of new processes of making steel. By 1900 all the great agricultural belts were in full use, with the result that since that year there has been an insufficient increase in agricultural production. This is not because there is not an abundance of unused land. As a matter of fact, only about a fifth of the total land-surface of this country is used for our great crops; but the remaining four-fifths lack some of the necessary conditions for profit-

able cultivation. They might occasionally produce a profitable harvest, but their cultivation year in and year out would result in a loss to their cultivator and a waste of national labour-force. The present prosperity of the farmer is due not to increased crops but to higher prices. Products have doubled in price without any substantial increase in volume of the product.

Just as the opening of the new century marked the end of our agricultural expansion, so 1910 marked the end of the increase in our production of minerals and metals. This was in part due to the lack of new ore-beds, but perhaps more largely to the development of monopoly-control over natural resources. Thus in our great iron industries, as in agriculture, we have mounting prices with no accompanying increase of production. Even the war did not increase the production of steel; it merely altered the product, guns and cannon taking the place of building materials.

Long before the war it was apparent that if railway rates were to be lowered, new capital in vast amount must be sunk in new construction. Many old mortgages also had to be re-financed. If both obligations were to be fulfilled, and cheaper transportation thus secured, a higher rate of interest was needed. But this was opposed in financial circles because a higher rate would lower the value of stocks. Even a one per cent rise would lower market-values by twenty billions. As a result of this opposition, necessary railway-improvements were not made; the financiers still hoped that a lower rate of interest would eventually prevail, and consequently they met old mortgages by negotiating temporary loans. As a result of all this, America entered the war with neither rolling-stock nor road-beds in a normal condition, and railway-equipment generally defective. We all know of the crisis which has resulted, but we do not realize that it would have come just the same if the world had remained at peace.

But behind this situation an even greater change has been going on. The consumption of the American people has been radically altered in character and in quality. New wants and standards have arisen; new sources of satisfaction have been acquired. In practically every direction the consumer has made large economies. Food has been economized, liquor banished, clothing standardized, housing improved, life prolonged and its enjoyments increased. Without attempting to explain these changes, we shall make an effort to point out their net effect. It may be estimated that from a given commodity-income, there may now be obtained something like thirty per cent more satisfaction than was possible twenty years ago. This increase of revenue is represented by a flow of real goods and satisfactions which come to the people as a whole each year, and which some one enjoys. The question, for the future, is: who is going to obtain this surplus, and what are to be the means of its distribution? The war has confused the problem and has given to events a complexity which makes solutions difficult. Only by separating these war-abnormalities from the natural results of industrial evolution, can we obtain a measure of the latter. In one way, war-difficulties constitute simply a speeding up of the evolutionary process which, without the war, might not have reached its present stage for a couple of generations.

The changes in consumption have brought with them a possible heightening of present pleasure which has disturbed the balance between present and future wants. The measure of this disturbance is the rate

of interest. In the days of our fathers, four per cent net was sufficient to call into being the capital needed for production. With our keener love of present enjoyment, and in spite of our heightened powers of acquisition, this rate has failed to stimulate saving. One of three things has to happen: consumers must return to their former habits of saving, or industry must deteriorate, or a much higher rate of interest must be offered, with a quick decline in security-values as a result.

War-financing was regulated by these conditions. Financiers refused to permit high rates of interest because of the depression of stock-values which would result. Immense quantities of paper money were issued, and a free use of the machinery of the national banking system was allowed. Moreover, the stock of goods held in reserve was rapidly reduced. Even before our entrance into the war, the excess of exports over imports amounted to eight billion dollars a year. To-day the national shortage in goods and machinery probably amounts to twelve billion dollars; and this in itself is a more important cause of high prices than is currency-inflation. With little or no stock in reserve, it is an easy matter to engineer a "corner," as our profiteers have shown.

In simple terms, a summary of war-financing would run about as follows: Total war expenses, forty-five billions; stock-reduction accounted for ten billions of this amount; reinvested war profits for fifteen billions; bank investment, five billions; inflation, five billions; forced and voluntary contributions by the public, six billions; deterioration, three billions. If these figures are correct, we have a total war deficit of over twenty billions. Depreciation and the reduction in stock can not safely be estimated at less than fifteen billions. At least half of our bank-deposits are consumer's funds, and are not designed for investment. People deposit their money in order that they may make cash purchases to better advantage. The share in war-loans contributed by the public alone, also came largely from consumers; that is, people bought bonds not as investment but because of temporary enthusiasm or social pressure. They have not resumed the consumer's attitude; hence the eagerness to dispose of bonds in order that some taste for pleasure may be indulged. The restoration of normal conditions therefore, necessitates replacement of stock and the renewal of deteriorated property; but it also requires the producers to supply the public with ten billion dollars worth of goods they are longing to consume.

SIMON N. PATTEN.

(To be concluded next week.)

## POETRY.

### RAIN ON THE WINDOWS.

Rain on the windows! How the chasm street  
Floods quick with sudden rivers! Where the green  
Oasis of a mimic wood is seen,  
Faintly, as from afar, I catch a fleet  
Glimpse of an olden orchard where the wheat  
Waits for the toilers and the golden sun;  
And somehow see slim shapes, one after one,  
Slip through the showery maze with unheeding feet.

And may a tired heart pauses, sick to hear  
Those friendly fingers tapping at the glass,  
And hear the wet winds whispering in the grass,  
As once he heard them; and the unbidden tear  
Leaps to the lid. . . . "Ah, but the meadows lay  
Sweet in the rain that long-gone summer's day!"

MAHLON LEONARD FISHER.

## SCIENCE.

## EINSTEIN'S THEORY OF RELATIVITY.\*

To the practical man who stresses the value of common sense and draws a sharp line between fact and non-fact, the ideas associated with the words "time" and "space" are sufficiently contained in the statement that he can not take to-morrow's walk yesterday. Einstein does not go so far as to dispute this, and philosophy goes no further, yet he has shown that certain phenomena can not be described in these words until their meaning has been broadened, or rather until they have been precisely defined. If one seeks no more than to travel first-class from the cradle to the grave—and less laudable ambition is easily found—words are clear enough. But not for the curious, among the many of whom we may mention such diverse inquisitives as Hegel, Newton, and Einstein. Words, if but copiously applied, satisfied Hegel; they hardly concerned Newton, who compared time to a flowing stream solely to fortify his conviction that time for mathematical purposes could be regarded as equicrescent. He was forced, however, by his inability otherwise to account for the prolateness of the earth, to believe in the absoluteness of rotation and this led him to use an unhappy phraseology in discussing space. The difficulty concerning the relativity of rotation has not yet been cleared up even by Einstein himself, whose mathematical equations require the presence of infinite quantities of matter on the boundaries of the universe. The last dozen words, it is freely admitted, are choicely un-Einsteinian: we rest our case. The age-old mists clinging around time and space have no sentimental value to Einstein and it is his ruthless ripping of ill-fitting ideas that has occasioned the demand for popular expositions of the relativity doctrine, although the demand manifests itself in a feeling that he has tampered with the mechanism of a well-ordered universe. Not a few of the popular articles hasten to explain that he hasn't done so and then by absurd analogies try to show us how he did it. Imagining words to have absolute meaning, they attempt to state new concepts in terms of old sounds and expect Einstein, as well as us, to believe that we live in "curved space" somewhat as mites in the rind of a ripe Schiedam cheese.

The growth of mathematical and physical science can be seen in the changes in meaning of old words. Isaac Barrow, Newton's teacher and predecessor at Cambridge, gives these definitions in his "Euclide's Elements" (about 1660):

A line is a longitude without latitude.

A right (straight) line is that which lies equally betwixt its points.

And these axioms:

Every whole is greater than its part.

Parallel right lines if infinitely produced would never meet.

The first definition is puerile; the second has that flavour of meaning which we associate somehow with our sense of symmetry. To-day the phrase "shortest distance" passes as a good enough substitute for "straight line," but the man who means what he says would have some difficulty saying it. Riemann in 1854, and later Beltrami, felt it necessary to learn to say it; they formulated quantitatively definite concepts which unfortunately are expressible only in the cryp-

tic terminology of mathematics. One curious result is that length may depend on position: change of position of a line involves change of its length. Einstein, using the same general method, arrived at still more bizarre conclusions which have met the test of measurement. The second axiom—Euclid's famous axiom of parallels—is true for us but is equally true when denied. For a non-technical discussion of this the reader is referred to Poincaré's *Science and Hypothesis*.

Consider now the first axiom which we shall paraphrase by "many is more than fewer." Draw a triangle with sides one, two, and three inches long and a series of lines across it parallel to the two-inch side and ending on the others. Then for every point on the one-inch side there is a parallel to a corresponding point on the three-inch, and conversely, for every point on the long side there is exactly one on the short. Our inference, in plain English, is that a three-inch line has no more points than a one-inch one, or, therefore, than part of itself. We thus come upon assemblages of points of which part is "as large as" the whole. Instead of assuming some of the points to have escaped by way of the fourth dimension, Cantor and Dedekind decided over a generation ago that the number concept needed revision and generalization. Accordingly, the mathematician has in certain cases replaced the phrase "this is as large as that" by "there is a one-to-one correspondence between this and that."

There are many other instances in which old senses do not fit new ideas; Weierstrass has given us a continuous, uninterrupted curve to which no tangent line can be drawn, and Peano has shown that a mathematical line may have area. In arithmetic, three times five is five times three; in certain branches of mathematics  $x$  times  $y$  is not  $y$  times  $x$ , for the reason that there are more general kinds of multiplication than the common variety; in the theory of infinite series, the order in which quantities are added is not arbitrary as it is in summing up a column of figures. In short, delving into the garden of mysteries about us and within us has so stimulated the growth of ideas sprouting in it that they have overrun our vocabulary. Strange conceptions arise through failure to recognize the growth of concept and the lag of language. Dimension is the generic term for length, breadth, and thickness; in mathematics these three dimensions correspond to the three co-ordinates (lengths, generally) necessary and sufficient to specify the position of a point in space. Since it is possible to write equations involving any number,  $n$ , of variable quantities—for example, Minkowski, *Raum und Zeit*, used four: three distances and time—the mathematician is justified in speaking of  $n$ -dimensional space but in doing so he believes no more in the existence of a fourth dimension than in a world in which the theory of assemblages replaces ordinary arithmetic.

The whole subject of relativity—the measurable, calculable creation of Lorentz, Einstein, and Minkowski—was started by the assumption that the existence of a word might be evidence for the *Ding-an-sich*. In 1886, Michelson and Morley tried to measure the velocity of the earth through the ether. They failed. And it could reasonably have been predicted that they would fail, notwithstanding Hertz's brilliant verification of Maxwell's electromagnetic theory of light. Hertz's work, by the way, followed Michelson's. The only *raison d'être* of the ether was that we disliked the absence of it more than its weird properties

\*"Easy Lessons in Einstein." Edwin E. Slosson. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

"From Newton to Einstein." Benjamin Harrow. New York: D. Van Nostrand Co.

"Einstein's Theory of Relativity." Prof. Lorentz. New York: Brentano's.

of being as rigid as steel and less resistant than a puff of air. Trammelled by our tactful, so to speak wire-pulling, conceptions of physical reactions, we could not familiarize ourselves with something being carried along by nothing. We needed a word to carry light, if not to shed it, just as we still need a word—*inertia*—to carry a projectile in its flight. There was positively no other reasons for believing in the ether.

The principle of relativity, which is not metaphysical speculation but a justifiable deduction from Michelson and Morley's experiment, postulates the impossibility of detecting absolute motion in space, or "through the ether," even by the aid of the incredibly high, yet finite, velocity of light. The simultaneity of distant events can be measured only by using signals that require time for transmission. We may by a process of excogitation arrive at what we mean by synchronous distant phenomena, but all experiments are conditioned by an actual physical universe. On the contrary, we can not so much as think of absolute motion. This is the substance of the special theory of relativity put forth by Einstein in 1905. If it is accepted, then, among the strange consequences we must accept with it, are these: no velocity can exceed that of light (186,000 miles per second); bodies contract along the line of motion (previously suggested by Lorentz and Fitzgerald); time intervals, supposedly equal, are longer on a moving system; clocks, otherwise identical, run at different rates unless they are in the same place and relatively at rest; bodies grow heavier the faster they move. (Kaufman had found this to be true of particles carrying electric charges). In 1908 Minkowski gave a brilliant geometric picture of a relativistic universe—subsequently much garbled by popularizers. In 1916-18 Einstein broadened his special relativity principle by removing the restriction that the velocity of light must be constant. At the same time he generalized Newton's law of attraction and interpreted gravitation as a kinematic phenomenon affecting light itself. This is his great contribution to physics and metaphysics; it will give him enduring fame because it is, in a way, the first "explanation" of gravitation since its discovery by Newton. Einstein had no small technical difficulties to overcome in developing his principle. Gauss, Riemann, Maxwell, Rayleigh, Kelvin and Poincaré—to mention only a few—accomplished no smaller technical marvels; if Einstein outranks them in fame it will be because he dared to follow where his boldly adventurous imagination led.

This indicates meagrely what the relativity principle is about. How and why it arose can not be made precisely clear without the vocabulary and machinery of mathematical physics. Nevertheless, a good attempt in this direction can be made. Slosson's "Easy Lessons in Einstein" is a good attempt written in an easy style far above the breezy smartness of the Sunday supplements; it is trustworthy, and throughout entertaining, if not always instructive. There is perhaps too much about the fourth dimension and somewhat too much striving "to loosen up," as he puts it, "our conventional ideas of the fixity of time and space." The docile layman is likely to infer that Einstein forbade him to think of simultaneous events, whereas Einstein has merely (*sic!*) shown the impossibility of measuring them. Slosson's highly commendable little book closes with a few terse pages by Einstein himself; clear and fruity to those armed with the necessary vocabulary—to others as illuminating as a Babylonian inscription. The last paragraph is understandable enough to be worth quoting:

The description of me and my circumstances in *The Times* (London) shows an amusing feat of imagination on the part of the writer. By an application of the theory of relativity to the taste of readers, to-day in Germany I am called a German man of science, and in England I am represented as a Swiss Jew. If I come to be regarded as a *bête noire*, the descriptions will be reversed, and I shall become a Swiss Jew for the Germans and a German man of science for the English!

That poor attempts at popular exposition of relativity are also possible is amply proved by Harrow's "From Newton to Einstein." It contains egregious mistakes, minor errors, misplaced emphasis, wrong interpretation, and a modicum of information. If Harrow believes (p. 66) "what is time in one place may correspond to part time and part space in another" he has prostituted his imagination.

"The Einstein Theory of Relativity" has a good introduction of twenty-four pages reprinted from various sources, followed by a small forty-page article by Lorentz, translated, rather heavily, from a Dutch paper. Lorentz, it may be added, is one of the greatest of living physicists and came perilously near anticipating Einstein's work of fifteen years ago. The article is devoted almost entirely to the gravitational aspect of relativity; it contains no flights of fancy and proceeds as sedately as a Freshman lecture on physics.

RICHARD F. DEIMEL.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

### BRANDING BRITISH LABOUR.

SIRS: In your issue of 23 June Mr. Arthur Gleason, in his article entitled, "Tempting British Labour," makes the statement that "the rulers of England are beginning to see the need of convincing the workers of the fat pickings to be had in tropical countries." That statement and the title under which it appears, are well documented. But elsewhere in his paper, Mr. Gleason implies that British labour is being warned of the danger of the bait, and it seems to me that signs are not wanting that British labour is becoming increasingly interested and well-informed in regard to the foreign policy of the Empire. Are we to believe that Sir Edward Carson would publicly outline a special brand of propaganda to be used to win the support of the British proletariat for an imperialistic policy, that the British Ministry of Reconstruction would go to the trouble of issuing a pamphlet supporting the theory that high wages and imperialism go together, and that Mr. Winston Churchill would raise the question of labour's competency to govern—are we to believe these things without believing that British labour is beginning to take an awakened interest in questions of foreign policy?

But Mr. Gleason apparently does not take any such hopeful view and towards the end of his article he states the grounds for his pessimism thus:

The conscious minority in British labour is ruthless in its demands inside the island. It insists on a new social order, no matter what it costs. If primary poverty for a generation is the price, labour is prepared to pay the price. It forces ultimate issues, and without a quaver goes on towards fundamental change. The overthrow of profit-sharing, the establishment of public ownership and workers' control—these trail consequences that touch the life of every worker. But when we turn to foreign policy, we find him indifferent, leaving such affairs to the Government. He votes resolutions that cover Ireland and India with a fog of words.

By what devious route does Mr. Gleason reach this conclusion? "Britain," he says, "has definite convictions about its destiny." Britain, it should be noted, not British labour, or even the British worker. Again, "the British . . . very simply believe their country is always right." Has Mr. Gleason never heard of British labour's protests and mutinies against the war with Russia, against aiding the Poles, against supporting the White Government of Hungary? Mr. Gleason should think more on these things, and less on the pious utterances of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and on the official platitudes of Earl Curzon.

Mr. Gleason gives it as his opinion that if a Labour Government under the leadership of Arthur Henderson, John Clynes and James Thomas came into power there would be very little change in British foreign policy. We may safely

accept that opinion because most of us know the quality of Messrs. Henderson & Co. We know something, too, of the quality of the parliamentary Labour group. But does not Mr. Gleason know that it is emphatically not these same Hendersons and their followers who are ruthless in their "demands inside the island." These Sunday-school parliamentarians do not know how to be ruthless inside an island, or anywhere else. But, thank the Lord, they do not comprise any considerable part of British labour—and that is precisely the point that Mr. Gleason ignores. Not content with confusing "the British" with "British labour," he proceeds in his final paragraph to confuse "every worker" and the ruthless "conscious minority" with the parliamentarians.

Perhaps Mr. Winston Churchill had only the parliamentarians in mind when he spoke of Labour's incapacity to govern. But Sir Edward Carson and the Ministry of Reconstruction are certainly not putting out propaganda to tempt the Labour M.P.'s, for they have been loyal to the imperialists since 1910.

The struggle between capital and labour in Britain is a real struggle, as Mr. Gleason should know, and is therefore being waged outside the walls of Parliament—outside the walls of an institution which belongs wholly to the old order of society. I am, etc.,  
New York.

J. B. C. Woods.

#### CONCERNING ROBERT BROWNING.

SIRS: Surely Mr. Michael Monahan when referring to the Brownings in his article "Re-readings and Revisions" in your issue for 23 June, forgot that he had just said in his reference to Whitman that poets are often the victims of their eulogists and imitators. Even more than Whitman, Robert Browning suffered from his eulogists, and I venture the assertion that Mr. Monahan has somehow mixed up the author of "Paracelsus" and "The Ring and the Book" with the Browning societies and commentators and critics. But even so, Browning will, of course, survive both the criticism of your contributor and the eulogies of his admirers. Strangely enough just after reading Mr. Monahan's article, I picked up a London paper and read the following:

How the vigorous optimism of Robert Browning appeals to Polar explorers was described by Sir Ernest Shackleton at a meeting at the Browning Settlement last night. On his Polar expeditions, said Sir Ernest, the explorers were never without Browning's works.

They once travelled 800 miles on a 22 ft. boat, and they took Browning's works with them, and they were of great benefit during the long winter days when they trusted themselves to the vast deep south of Cape Horn. When their premier ship was crushed in the ice he had seen to it that Browning's works were safely stored away in a sleeping-bag, and the crew took the Encyclopaedia Britannica with them.

One page of that volume they discovered would light twelve pipes. Of course, they used the pages that did not matter, and that part of the work was that dealing with money and exchange, which the crew said was no good.

I might add that there is no surer way of finding the true value of a poet's work than by estimating the extent to which he is read in working-class libraries. I was told some years ago that an investigation of such libraries in Great Britain showed that Browning was by far the most popular poet and that "Paracelsus" was better known than any other long poem by an English author. I am, etc., G. N.

#### WOMAN AND MARRIAGE.

SIRS: The very able, and to a large extent cogent article of Laurence Housman, in a recent number of the *Freeman*, on "Woman and Marriage" seems to me to over-simplify history. Within such brief limits much simplification was, of course, necessary; but a bird's-eye view of Victorian England, against a dim background of primitive man, hardly satisfies one's sense of historic proportion. The deficiency has struck me particularly in connexion with Mr. Housman's references to the Church as *particeps criminis* of the subjection of women in marriage. He avoids, indeed, holding the Church directly responsible for the position of the Victorian Englishwoman; but he fails to suggest the truth that whatever there was of degradation in that position was in large measure the result of a decline from a freer and more dignified mediæval—and premediæval—position, coincident with a like decline in the position of the Church itself. A rather striking illustration is the fact that the vow "to obey" was first introduced into his English marriage-rite by Henry VIII.

Another fact which Mr. Housman leaves in obscurity is that the Church knows no inequality between the sexes in respect of the sin of adultery—English civil laws of contrary purport being entirely antagonistic to canon law. Another, which one would not expect from his presentation, to discover is that St. Bernardine, of the Order of Friars Minor,

preaching at Siena in 1427, addressed the women of his audience as chiefly responsible for the chaste conduct of relations between themselves and their husbands, and derided as a specious excuse the plea that mere obedience relieved them of that responsibility.

These specific facts Mr. Housman, of course, was under no obligation to cite; but I contend that they indicate a different state of the case between women and the Church from that which he suggests. His Victorian viewpoint, however, is perhaps most evident in his childlike faith in what another of your contributors, Mr. Avé-Lallement, two pages later in the same number, calls "the damnable ethics of the free contract." When our social education has advanced a little further we shall probably see that "progress from status to contract" is no more the last word in the sexual than it is in the industrial field. I am, etc.,  
Warren, Penna.

C. I. CLAFLIN.

#### THE DIFFERENCE TO HIM.

SIRS: Would seven years in the White House not possibly change your radical views? I ask because Chapter II, p. 49 of "The New Freedom" declares:

By tyranny, as we now fight it, we mean control of the law, of legislation and adjudication, by organizations which do not represent the people, by means which are private and selfish. We mean specifically, the conduct of our affairs and the shaping of our legislation in the interest of special bodies of capital and those who organize their use. We mean the alliance, for this purpose, of political machines with selfish business. We mean the exploitation of the people by legal and political means.

While I find (in looking up the speech I see that stirring sentence: "I can not conceive what kind of man could be a disciple of Lenin") that on 6 September last, the author of "The New Freedom" declares:

Now and again you have said there were small groups of capitalists who were controlling the industry and therefore the development of the United States. Seriously, my fellow citizens, if that is so, (and I have sometimes feared it was) we must break up that monopoly. I am not now saying that there is any group of our fellow-citizens who are consciously doing anything of the kind and I am saying that these allegations must be proved.

What a lot of difference seven years can make to be sure. Yet one would think that the President of the United States would have access to information that would enlighten concerning these moot questions. How peculiar that the man who made the "allegations" finds, after seven years access to information, that his own allegations must be proved. Like St. George finding that the dragon must, after all, be materialized. Saddening, upon my word! I am, etc.,  
J. L. B.

#### IN DEFENCE OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

SIRS: In the language of the street—"it makes me tired" to see all the newspapers, yours included, accept the statement as a fact that the nation repudiated President Wilson in the Congressional election of 1918. The nation did not repudiate President Wilson. The cause of his defeat was the rotten system of electing that this country has. Practically in every country in the world the people are represented in their popular assemblies in proportion to the vote of the different parties—that is, they have proportional representation.

Such a thing as occurred in this city in 1912 could not have happened if we had had proportional representation—that is, the Democrats with forty-eight per cent of the vote could not have elected 100 per cent of the Senators. Nor could the Republicans in 1916 have elected twenty-six out of the twenty-seven Senators above the Bronx—giving the Democrats only one Senator. Proportional representation in accordance with the vote would have given the Republicans sixteen and the Democrats ten.

If we had applied proportional representation in every state for the election of Congressmen in 1918, President Wilson would have been sustained and the representation in the House of Representatives would have been as follows:

Democrats .....	231	instead of .....	194
Republicans .....	193	instead of .....	235
Socialists .....	6	instead of .....	1
Non-partisan League .....	3	instead of .....	3
Prohibitionists .....	2	instead of .....	1
Independents .....	0	instead of .....	1

435 435  
Probably in the ages to come we will lose a little of our conceit and learn that our method of electing is not perfect. I am, etc.,  
New York City.

JOHN J. HOPPER.

## THE THEATRE.

### THE REVOLUTION AND THE DRAMA.

"It's our language that's run out," says a philological friend, "every language has a few good, spontaneous years, and then it dries up. Ours has dried up into that relic of a means of expression we call newspaper English." Truly our newspapers rarely find time or take trouble to coin new phrases. Their sentences are dropped into the worn grooves of mentality as pennies in a slot-machine, secure of a response as standardized as chewing-gum. But good verse has been written in the United States at odd times in a busy history, and good narrative prose. It is only the stage that has completely failed us, and it has not failed utterly in England, where there is still comedy extant.

Nobody, at least among those who speak out, thinks very well of American plays. They were always bad enough; the present run seems inexcusable. We can't help protesting. But very possibly we are protesting against cosmic processes, using mild language on a land-slide. Perhaps it wasn't the manager's fault. If he is submerged in his public we can blame it on the theatre-goer. Except for the fact that the theatre-goer doesn't exist. Theatre-goers are only casual individuals, adrift among things that are.

What is it, after all, that we demand of our stage? Tragedy like Shakespeare, comedy like Wilde and Sheridan, satiric drama like "Gammer Gurton's Needle" and Synge? Such as these would satisfy us. Whatever discrimination we have is based on them and on others like them. We are in an ancient, honourable tradition, and instinctively uphold it, though with no appreciable effectiveness. Good plays, to us, are plays that please by the methods of accepted masters. It seems to us that these modern plays are loose-lipped, sentimental, patched, flippant, lacking in self-respect. We may be wrong. But whether we are wrong or not it is quite clear that we are never going to get what we have set our hearts on, because the kind of play we want had its roots deep in ancient and mediæval civilization. The peoples of the earth have been engaged actively and commendably of late in smashing the remnants of mediæval civilization, and with these remnants they have smashed the possibilities of tragedy, comedy, and satiric plays as they have always been known. Cathedrals and Madonnas went out with the Reformation. Tragedy departed with the advent of Rousseau; middle-class comedy will be a lost art when we have disposed of the third estate; and education will banish the mingled farce and poetry of provincial ignorance. Judging by plays produced in Greece, Spain, France and England, great tragedy can exist only in small states that are both religious and patriotic, and in those years when some emotional whirlwind has caught up all the fragments of a nation into a temporary integration. A country's comedy may live, obviously, after the passing of religion, so long as the essential forms of the state-organization and its hereditary morals are intact.

From the days of Thespis, the methods and theories of play-making have varied little or not at all. The trenchant sayings of Bernard Shaw find a place in Aristotle's categories, and a reading of the commentaries of ancient, mediæval, or modern times would give much the same impression of the aims and range of stage representation. Minturno, writing in 1563, put the possibilities in three classes:

One class records serious or grave happenings, and concerns those of high rank—the great and the illustrious. This is the field of the tragic poet. A second recognizes the

middle strata of society—common folk of the city or the country: the farmer, the common soldier, the petty merchant, and similar persons. The third division has to do with humble persons, mean and ludicrous, with all those, in fact, who seem most fitted to provoke merriment, thus supplying subject matter for satirical poetry.

Since the Renaissance it has been possible to use all three social classes in the same play, but to each is accorded, now, as of old, the respect due his station. Kings and nobles are given reverence. The servants and underlings are made ridiculous. The middle classes are viewed with amused tolerance. We shall in time do away with arbitrary distinctions of class, and in so doing we shall devalue the appeal of every "good" play that has come down to us.

That the theory of Aristotle and Minturno was sound in the matter of tragedy at least, is indicated by the fact that there has been no great tragedy in England since the disappearance of the nobility and of kings as great forces in English society. With the execution of Charles I and the discrediting of divine right the chances for another Tamburlaine or Macbeth were abruptly ended. Since then England has produced comedy. If comedy depends as implicitly on the existence of a middle class, it too will disappear with its original, leaving no successors of Jonson, Sheridan, Goldsmith, Wilde, and Shaw. The plays of Synge are satiric, and depend for their existence on the illiteracy of certain parts of Ireland. With compulsory education these backwaters of speech and manners will find outlet into the ocean of modern life, will merge and clear of all racy idiosyncrasies. Socially and politically England stands to gain; the sacrifices of an art-form is a small consideration beside the advance of justice and enlightenment.

But there are other difficulties in the way of the construction of traditional drama beside the abolition of class distinctions. State religion is gone, and patriotism is going. These origins of national pride, the storm centres of great enthusiasms, are, and with reason, to be put aside. They have failed us in practice. So little is left of them that the greatest war of history has produced no figure of heroic proportions. The leaders were no more or no less worthy of admiration than were generals and executives of former times, but we moderns have no capacity for credulity. No Frederick would be given worship as "the great," no Napoleon could capture imaginations completely nowadays. We are too alert and cynical, much too well informed. The newspapers and moving pictures have disillusioned us concerning the most important persons and actions. We know them to be human. We have no belief in anything larger than ourselves. We have come upon the truth that there are no supermen and we have punctured the fallacy of heroism. As a substitute for beliefs we have wants in plenty, and they have come out on the stage in the form of problem plays, pragmatic and scientific. They are propaganda, useful as advertisements, but fundamentally wrong and unsatisfactory as art, because they are not free.

The necessity for some generally accepted religion is deeply inherent in tragedy. It is ethical in intention. Even in Addison's day, folk no longer gave credence to the moral doctrine that evil and good are punished or rewarded in this world as in the fifth act. Yet no great tragedy has dared to contradict that dictum. In England the culture-heritage of morals from a dead faith still supplies a background for comedy. In America the prevailing philosophy is fatalism; it follows that we have nothing to believe in but ourselves and our lucky stars. Luck is our substitute

for a god. But luck makes very shaky material for building a play of any sort. It is too easily arranged on the stage to merit credence. To convince, a play must be logical, must avoid the *Deus ex machina*. And that is the kind of god luck is.

But even though we had the credulity necessary for self-abnegation and for religion, there would be no avoiding the centrifugal interests of our times. Politics no longer centre about small capitals, but about the axis of the earth. Whatever wonder and admiration we might have for Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson, or whatever faith in their ideals, it would be impossible to stage their victory or defeat. The stage was stretched beyond endurance by the alarms and invasions of Henry V, and must now content itself with tiny segments of imposing world-events. The moving picture is equipped to show but not to interpret international pageantry. With political internationalization the accepted functions of theatres as fans of hero-worship, critics of custom, and satirists of the mob become of doubtful value. We are ashamed of our privileged classes and are critical of our leaders. The morals and manners of which we were proud have been short-circuited by foreign contacts. The excellence of the theatre of our memories and desires depended on complexities of culture and convention which have been resolved into simple human elements. It is to these simpler, and on the whole cruder desires and impulses that our makers of plays must appeal. When a race divests itself of conventions it has nothing to fall back upon in the mass but animalism. The loss of respect for forms would in a moment turn an orderly court-room assemblage into a mob demanding direct satisfactions. Indirect sex-appeal is no longer enough for the modern American, because he has lost his regard for indirections. As the mob wants immediate blood, so he wants immediate sex.

Whatever new drapery of subterfuge the race may weave for itself will be of a very different pattern and texture from this that we unconsciously discard. The new theatre will be of a piece with our new self-evasions. There has never been a change in society so basic as that which is on all our lips, and though critics of the drama, like most other thinking people, are friendly to the idea of social revolution, they have not yet appreciated that a social revolution means likewise a revolution in æsthetics, or at least in those æsthetics that are so interwoven with community life as the principles of stagecraft. They are quite right, I believe, in classifying our existing theatre as idle trumpery. But they are mistaken in advocating a return to the ideas that produced the masterpieces of former centuries. Whatever our playwrights and actors accomplish will grow naturally out of the living and self-sufficient idiom of to-day. The critics are attempting, as the little theatre is attempting, to bring about a reversion to type.

But the old edifice has fallen, and we shall have to build from the ground up, little as the results may be to the taste of men and women whose training has given them insight into the art of an alien era more subtly wrought and richly devised.

MAXWELL ANDERSON.

## MISCELLANY.

THE rumour of the death of Fernando de Lucia, which I mentioned last week, has brought back many memories of the days when as a friend of the conductor Mancinelli, I used occasionally to be behind the scenes at Covent Garden and hobnob with the artists. I re-

member when Puccini came over to bring out the London première of "Tosca." He was a nuisance at the rehearsals, a sort of human metronome, plunging about from one artist to another, over-anxious, exceedingly nervous, driving some of the singers to distraction. Imagine keeping your mind on the innumerable exactions of a part like *Cavaradossi*, while this excitable being dogged your heels about the stage, clapping ponderous hands to mark the time, stamping with an uncommonly able-bodied pair of feet until the dust of ages rose in clouds out of the old stage—it was built in 1853, I think—and sometimes braying out the key in a voice as unmusical as Mancinelli's own. Even the sublime Ternina was not proof against extreme vexation in those days of hurried and fretful preparation. De Lucia, however, never betrayed impatience, never for an instant compromised the serenity and distinction which made him always, in private as in public, something of the ideal courtier. "It is all so unnecessary," he said to me, with a charming smile, "If there is not time to rehearse, well—take time! The heavens will not fall."

YES, in one word, this was pre-eminently his gift, the greatest of all gifts, as it is also the rarest, rarest especially in literature and art—he had distinction. By it he managed to lift "I Pagliacci" out of the merely banal and melodramatic and into the category of the satisfying and the memorable. He had a whimsical and buoyant playfulness. I remember going on the stage one evening, carrying a basket of superb English strawberries that my brother had brought me. The short overture to "Pagliacci" had already begun and everyone was waiting for the curtain bell, when de Lucia and Antonio Scotti, *par nobile fratrum* in artistry, spied me and my strawberries, swooped down on them like highwaymen, and sat cross-legged on the stage, munching them in all the clownish manner of *Canio* and *Tonio*. De Lucia was the most truly charming host, I think, that ever offered me hospitality. He gave a capital dinner at the Café d'Italia in Soho, where covers were laid for ten, and a fifteen-pound Severn salmon, magnificently garnished, lay in state, where *Chianti* appeared—tell it not in Kansas!—and *Asti Spumante*, and Mancinelli told tales out of school about Maurice Grau and Sir Augustus Harris.

ONE morning, while a trial of new voices was going on, de Lucia sat with me in the stalls, listening sympathetically to the ordeal—necessary, probably, but so seldom productive of pleasing results. One young girl broke down badly, a victim of overstrained nerves. De Lucia left me, strolled up on the stage, unobtrusively sat down by her, chatted a few minutes, and then wandered back again. I never knew what he said to her, but I noticed that she recovered her composure at once, and left the opera-house with head erect, evidently encouraged. I happened to hear afterward that her tuition had been nearly too much for her purse, that she was very poor and had been subsisting too long on short commons. Possibly he offered to give her a few lessons himself, as a free gift to a struggling fellow-artist; it would be quite his way. He, too, had had his moments of nervousness and uncertainty in earlier years, and he never forgot them. He knew the ordeal of endless labour that must be gone through to attain a method of voice-production as faultless as his own, and he had had boundless sympathy with all who had respect enough for this art to sacrifice themselves, as he himself had done, to its inexorable discipline.

IF art and nature ever combined to produce anything more intelligent than an intelligent Frenchwoman, I should like very much to meet it. Yvette Guilbert, by vocation a *diseuse*, but by everything else a wise woman of the world, delivered an after-dinner address in New York a little while ago, so full of sound criticism and advice born of long knowledge of the American people,

as to redeem the institution that once served to entertain but which now merely postpones the dancing after a feast. Mme. Guilbert—in the broken English which she so skilfully keeps broken so that truths may be less unpalatable—said that we in America are wanting in knowledge and appreciation of the artistic and intellectual achievements of other countries; that we need to mingle with the minds of the world. This by way of encouraging a closer study of French letters. It was a polite way of saying that we are still—except in affairs material— provincial. If we were to devote a tithe of the energy that we devote to discussing a League of Nations to building up a league of cultures, a true league of nations might come quietly and naturally of itself. Without compromising our Americanism—let it be 200 per cent, if you will—we can ponder to our advantage the mode and manners of alien peoples, even those despised strangers within our gates whom we are so feverishly trying to mould in our own image.

ALONG New York's Riverside Drive and in other places where the children of the rich and their nurses most do congregate, it is plainly to be seen that working-class children have a far better chance of normal psychological development than have those of the well-to-do. Those nurses, for the most part, are a terrible handicap. The coloured nurses are, of course better than the white, for they are endowed by nature with enough resiliency of spirits, readiness for laughter, and playfulness, to possess some harmony and compatibility with child nature. The white nurses comprise a varied assortment of those too young, too old, too stupid, or too lazy, to undertake anything else but the despised task of "taking care of children." Fortunately the children pay much attention to each other and an irreducible minimum to their nurses. Every activity of the nurses in connexion with their charges is likely to be repressive: "Don't bounce that ball too high." "Don't touch that dirt." "Don't go over there." In other words don't do anything really interesting with reckless energy and abandon, the way a child should, and naturally does, do everything. Of course the nurses know that their employers will consider them efficient at their job if they are able to impose the habit of instant and implicit obedience upon their helpless charges. But some day, it is to be hoped, the generality of parents will understand that mere unthinking obedience should be the last and not the first thing sought with children.

THE higher order of beauty, which is but the emanation of a beautiful soul, does not fade or diminish or suffer any evil change with the years that are ever stealing something from the loveliness that is of the flesh alone. Nay, rather does it mellow and increase like those flowers which put on their fairest tints with the passing of autumn. For the soul grows young as the body grows old, shining through it as through a vase and turning even decay into a gracious and hallowed likeness of beauty. The wise poet tells us:

For of the soul the body form doth take,  
Since soul is form and doth the body make.

I know a woman whose beauty is of that rare spiritual type which the passing years seem but to purify and heighten. Ministers are they of a supernal service, taking away that which is too grossly of the flesh, refining here, spiritualizing there, touching and retouching this living portrait of a soul. Without repining, yea, with a full content, she yields herself to these unseen influences. No longer in her prime of youth, she is wholly free from that foolish dread of age which is the penalty of beauty amongst her sex—poor slaves of the looking-glass! Yet is she lovely with that ineffable loveliness which is proper to no age or time of life—which may be seen in the young and perhaps more commonly in the old. When I once ventured to praise her beauty, as well I might, she hushed me gently, saying, "No, I am not beautiful—yet; but I shall be. Wait!"

JOURNEYMAN.

## BOOKS.

### A MORAL HOBBLEDEHOY.

ONE marvels at the appearance of a new life of the hero of "Thyrsis." To the impatient eye of our epoch, Clough seems almost the matchless prig, the most odourless blossom of Early Victorianism: even the half dozen really successful poems that came from his pen express an attitude as uncongenial as possible to an age whose chief interest is, on the one hand, social, and on the other æsthetic. There are, of course, two ways in which, not as a living poet, but as a *corpus vile*, Clough offers an opportunity to the modern critic: as a victim of conflict and repression he is an unequalled subject for the psychoanalyst; as the prize schoolboy of Thomas Arnold's Rugby he exposes himself all too easily to the satirist of the immediate past. Mr. Lytton Strachey has already devoted a few acid paragraphs to "this earnest adolescent, with the weak ankles and the solemn face," who "lived entirely with the highest ends in view" and spent a good part of his later life "conscientiously doing up brown paper parcels for Florence Nightingale." But Mr. Osborne is free from any such levity. To him Clough is neither the *corpus vile* nor the hero: he is the occasion none the less for some uncommonly adroit criticism.

Although it has an American title-page, Mr. Osborne's book<sup>1</sup> comes to us from England. One gathers, however, from an idiom on one of the earlier pages ("A rather bitter awareness of this limitation is *back of the lines*," etc.) as well as from certain later allusions, that Mr. Osborne is an American. That is not surprising; Clough, the moral hobbledehoy, has a vested position in the American university world, he has come down as the "better Carlyle" of Emerson's phrase, as the champion good boy of the generation in which our educational orthodoxy took form. And more than Matthew Arnold's even, his "problems," his "complexes," to substitute the cant of one decade for the cant of another, are peculiarly those of the American professor. Anything that happens to be sauce for the professorial goose is usually considered sauce also for the pupillary gander, so that Clough's fame is secure for some years yet. But even aside from this, the world does not seem to wish to forget men who have been very unhappy. Stress and conflict always make a life appealing to certain types of mind: as Mr. Osborne says, "it is the contradictions a man's life affords that arrest attention." If Clough had been a complacent person he would have gone the way of so many of his greater contemporaries. As it is, there will always be some to praise him, and a few to love.

For Clough was, after all, a dupe of the Victorian age: that alone might have preserved his fame. Mr. Osborne speaks of him as a victim of hypertrophied conscience and atrophied impulse. His whole later life, quite apart from the evidence of his poems, reveals the frustrated artist. He was lethargic and torpid. The least practical decision he made "rested," we are told, "on a vast and complicated array of considerations." He liked to drudge, he loved routine, he had an obsession for being "useful" that brought him to that absurd posture as Miss Nightingale's factotum; and his letters tell how greatly he preferred the long task of revising Dryden's Plutarch to that of writing his own poems. This latter fact explains

<sup>1</sup> "Arthur Hugh Clough." William Insley Osborne. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

all the former: it explains why the poet of "work and duty" idled away so much of that short life when it was not engaged in labours of no significance whatever, labours that gave him an illusion of self-discipline. Clough had identified the god Pan with the devil because they both have cloven hoofs. And the god had his revenge.

How did it happen? How can one explain the miscarriage of Clough's talent? Only by grasping the significance, in relation to the creative impulse, of those ideals of work and duty which he imbibed from Arnold and Carlyle, only by understanding what gave those ideals their ascendancy over him.

They were the ideals, we can see now, of an age of trade and empire-building. Carlyle's disciples were not poets, they were men of action; and although on one side he gave birth to a line of reformers, on the other, and the more effective side, he was the spiritual father of those Great Silent Men, the captains of industry and the colonial governors, who established the British flag and the products of Manchester in the four corners of the earth. Arnold, was, quite unconsciously of course, an able second in the same imperial campaign: as Mr. Osborne notes, the Rugby roll of the years of Arnold's reign divides itself almost equally into soldiers and clergymen-deans, headmasters and colonial chaplains, in surprising number, all missionaries of the great idea. That, in practical effect, is what "work and duty" meant in the Victorian sense. It was a discipline *for* something, and that something was not the kingdom of heaven but the empire of this world.

Mr. Osborne, who might not care to father such views as this, speaks however of Clough's "immensely reverent" spirit. As a boy the poet was unusually dependent on his mother and we know how often in such cases a boy grows up dependent upon a series of substitutes for his mother. This was the case with Clough who, before sitting at the feet of Carlyle and coming under Miss Nightingale's thumb, yielded himself to Dr. Arnold, "a servant ready to subject his own will completely." "He was Arnold's favourite," we are told, "as distinctly as he had been his mother's favourite." And as Arnold's favourite, possessing himself none of the instincts of a man of action, he absorbed a gospel, valuable only as a means to an end, which for him inevitably became not a means but an ideal. Thus it may be said that the more character he got the less character he had, for he acquired a character which he could not express in action and he failed to develop the only character he might have expressed. He became a sort of parody of Carlyle's Great Silent Man, a type whose virtue is that, although silent, he does things: while Clough was simply a poet who could not speak. He had been robbed, in short, of his imagination.

Wordsworth [as Mr. Osborne observes] had the useful conviction that he could best learn morality from the trees, which are very beautiful, whereas Clough was persuaded that he could best learn morality from Dr. Arnold, who unfortunately was not nearly so beautiful as he was good. With the young Wordsworth and the young Milton, morality was a matter more of reflection than of getting things done—and reflection shades off easily and naturally into imagination. But not so, getting things done. Given a strong sense of duty, many things to do, and the exercise of the imagination becomes at once a wasteful sin. Clough . . . literally had no time for the 'wish-thinking' which modern psychology says is the making of the painter, the musician, and the poet.

So we have that pathetic bundle of contradictions, the Clough of literary history, the man who tried to write a play without apparently ever having seen one,

the writer of tortuous doggerel who had been so busy under-studying incipient empire-builders that he had no energy left for pondering on the art of poetry, who tried to convince himself that the highest beauty would become visible in heaven to those that worked hard, but who on earth saw no beauty in Italy, who longed for the career of action and created heroes of an abysmal weakness of will, who spent his life trying to "do to-day's duty," and who concluded in "Dipsychus" that duty for him was a self-expression which he could not and no longer even wished to attain. It is a fascinating story, the story of this man who, as Mr. Osborne says, "had quelled his own instincts too early and too successfully" and in whom had atrophied "the force of passion and the force of aspiration." Clough is a minor poet, but his character and career will continue to interest us as long as the universities of the English-speaking world produce types that have so much in common with him.

#### THE FULFILMENT OF DEMOCRACY.

"The Unfinished Programme of Democracy,"<sup>1</sup> by Dr. Richard Roberts readily divides itself into two parts; the first three chapters in which the author sets forth what he considers to be the causes of the present crisis in democracy, and the rest of the book in which he specifies in detail and supports with argument the measures and changes that would, in his view, fulfil the democratic ideal.

In practice, says Dr. Roberts, democracy has gone no further than the achievement of a form of political government, an achievement which is now being severely criticized by syndicalists on the one hand and authoritarians on the other. Scepticism as to the validity of so-called democratic institutions has been vastly increased in every stratum of society by the experiences of the last few years when we have seen in every country purely administrative departments becoming voracious of executive authority and successfully encroaching upon the prerogatives of representative assemblies.

This failure of democracy—for it is no less—to complete its programme Dr. Roberts attributes to a lack of social vision. Setting itself ostensibly against political privilege and economic exploitation, democracy so far has achieved a degree of political emancipation; but real freedom it has failed to secure because it lacked a reserve of power sufficient to set up safeguards against economic exploitation. That is why the scene is being set to-day for the great third act of the drama of democracy, when the proletarian masses will seek to remove the economic disabilities under which they labour. Their attack will be directed not only against the existing embodiments of economic power and privilege but against their prime cause and source, the doctrine of property-rights.

Fundamentally, the author of this provocative book sees the contrast between the democratic achievement and the democratic ideal as reflecting a conflict between a naturalistic regime and one broadly humanistic. In the former, he sees the ruling force to be the determinism of natural processes, biological and mechanical, manifesting itself in the pecuniary standard of modern profit-making and in the "paramountcy of the economic motive"; in the other rule the free moral ends of men under which the whole process of man's work would be redeemed and true liberty and fellowship would be achieved.

"The task before us therefore, is the deliverance of life from the ascendancy of the economic motive; and at the bottom this means the redemption of commerce from the obsession of profit-making," says Dr. Roberts, summing up his philosophy and his practical programme, a programme which demands first: that "the production and distribution of the necessities of life should be definitely placed out side the sphere of competition"; second: that "a limit should be placed upon profits, dividends, in-

<sup>1</sup> "The Unfinished Programme of Democracy." Richard Roberts. B. W. Huebsch.

come and fortunes"; third: the dissolution of "the connexion between work and wages" by the redemption of work as a craft of intrinsic interest and by the guarantee of a national minimum standard of living. Economic freedom, freedom from the dominance of the economic motive having thus been achieved, true liberty becomes possible. This ideal resolves itself for Dr. Roberts into liberty of the mind—into a freedom for genuine human fellowship. Here for him is the heart of the matter. He believes the realization of his ideal to be possible only if our modern world is freed from the power of those economic interests which Léon Duguit has described as the heirs and successors of the *dominium* of ancient Roman society. Furthermore, if the practice of fellowship is to thrive, it must also be free from the restraint of the *imperium* of the sovereign State.

In his practical programme, the author follows pretty closely that of the British Guild Socialists. Like them he favours national ownership of the tools of industry and their operation by all those who are employed in the industry, from office-boy to manager. Like the Guildsmen he favours a bi-cameral system of representative government, one house representing occupational groups; the other elected, as parliaments are elected to-day, on a territorial basis. He is also in substantial agreement with the Guild Socialists in his view regarding the distribution of power between these two chambers. In so far as he differs from the Guild programme he approaches the position taken, in Great Britain, by Patrick Geddes and the brothers Victor and Benchara Branford, and less closely, that taken in France, by "Probus," the leader of *La Ligue pour la Démocratie* and those among the French Regionlists who are of the liberal persuasion in social thought and policy.

It is only the first part of the book, in which Dr. Roberts states his social theory, that in the view of the writer of this note, exposes itself to criticism. The full weight of Dr. Roberts's protest against a naturalistic philosophy of life may be allowed, and one may fully agree that "the problem of sound social integration is not merely an affair of processes operating properly," processes which, on the human plane, are an affair of psychology: the author states his position on this point clearly: "Psychology deals with an *opus operatum*, a work still to be done, the production of a living, wholesome society." But such a statement over-emphasizes the opposition between casualism and finalism, between process and end, between fact and value. The antithesis is an old one in philosophy; but it is not necessary to put it so as to leave a choice of only one of two unavoidably contradictory propositions. Dr. Roberts declares:

The area of the margin of human freedom may be a subject of controversy; but it is impossible to take seriously the kind of determinism which denies the possibility of directing human action to deliberately chosen ends. The actual range of our control over our actions may be limited; but within those limits it is very real. And in any case, it does not require to be very much to make the evolution hypothesis of very doubtful validity as an interpretation of the whole life of man.

The protest has its point, but a sociology which concerns itself with ends, as Dr. Roberts insists that it must, only weakens its case by assuming a position which implies an irreconcilable conflict between process and principle.

THEODORE M. AVE-LALLEMANT.

#### A CREATIVE TRAVELLER AND OTHERS.

Is it an illusion if one thinks of the travel book as of an almost extinct species? The world is so well known nowadays that one must, at least, have a good reason in order to write about one's travels, and the best of reasons will hardly win us readers unless our wanderings have taken us to countries that have for this generation either a political or a pathological appeal. The vogue of books on the South Seas is surely due to the disgust with civilization the last few years especially have bred. As for Europe, it had become before the war a Cook's paradise

whose every corner stirred in the breast an emotion stereotyped from some nineteenth century poet, novelist or critic. The relatively few travel books published lately have dealt for the most part with lands (like Russia and the Orient generally) that menace our established institutions, or lands that offer an escape from them. Is that because society as we have known it has lost so much of its savour?

Kipling's travels, to be sure, have at no time envisaged Europe. This drummer of empire has been on the road all his life but he has never lingered where there was no chance of barter in his own particular wares. His new letters<sup>1</sup> are old letters in reality: the most recent of them, those written in 1913 from "Egypt of the Magicians" (the magicians being, it goes without saying, the English) reveal the same brisk and cocky adolescence as the group clattered off on the typewriter twenty-five years ago in America. These American records are precisely in the vein of "From Sea to Sea"; they suggest, in their peculiar preoccupation with the outsides of things, a somewhat rudimentary intellect and a highly over-stimulated nervous system. In the "Letters to the Family," written from Canada in 1907, we find a still more characteristic Kipling. The family is, of course, the imperial cousinhood, conceived by the family letter-writer, himself playing the rôle of coach, as a team of earnest young scufliers of the football age, and the game is the White Man's Game, which Kipling interprets with a whole code of sporting ethics and that all too familiar Biblical argot which has come to seem, as it were, the thieves' slang of imperialism. Kipling used to speak of lesser breeds without the law; what, therefore, are we to say of his sporting ethics when, to express his contempt for the "inferior" immigrants of continental Europe, he uses the argument that in renouncing their own country they have "broken the rules of the game." A scrupulous referee would disallow that ruling as decidedly yellow, for if they were really "inferior" how could they be expected to know anything about the game? Which also shows how, in the hands of the empire-builders, the gentleman's code becomes the code of the cad. So all-pervading is Kipling's sporting consciousness that for him even newspapers leave a "spoor and scent" behind them. As for sociology, it is short and simple in its implications:

Unluckily the railroads which made the country are bringing in persons who are particular as to the nature and amenities of their work, and if so be they do not find precisely what they are looking for, they complain in print which makes all men seem equal.

It is quite evident that Professor Dewey (whose letters<sup>2</sup> are also written "to the family") has enjoyed visiting countries "where the scholar is looked up to and not down upon." He writes with all the zest of a boy on his first trip abroad. The letters are colloquial, some of them are of little significance, many of them touch on questions Professor Dewey has discussed more interestingly and in greater detail in his recent articles. Most striking is their revelation of Professor Dewey's responsiveness to the aesthetic aspects of China and Japan: considering the minor and rather ignominious part played by aesthetics in his philosophy, one is perhaps naturally surprised by this. As one might expect, education is the most frequently discussed topic in these letters; there are many accounts of visits to Japanese and Chinese schools, and one notes that Professor Dewey keenly relished the activities of the Peking students in their Shantung strike of June, 1919. As a summary of his political views one is perhaps justified in quoting the following:

I didn't ever expect to be a jingo, but either the United States ought to wash its hands entirely of the Eastern question, and say, 'It's none of our business, fix it up yourself any way you like,' or else it ought to be as positive and aggressive in calling Japan to account for every aggressive move she makes, as Japan is in doing them. It is sickening that we allow Japan to keep us on the defensive and explanatory,

<sup>1</sup> "Letters of Travel." Rudyard Kipling. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page and Co.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters from China and Japan." John Dewey and Alice Chipman Dewey. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co.

and talk about the open door, when Japan has locked most of the doors in China already and got the keys in her pocket. I understand and believe what all Americans say here—the military party that controls Japan's foreign policy in China regards everything but positive action, prepared to back itself by force, as fear and weakness, and is only emboldened to go still further. Met by force, she would back down. I don't mean military force, but definite, positive statements about what she couldn't do that she knew meant business.

All of which has a rather familiar ring.

But those, after all, are only pragmatic traveller's books. Mr. Richard Curle is a traveller by instinct and vocation. Those who have read his sketches, "Life is a Dream," know his gift for evoking atmospheres; those who remember his study of Joseph Conrad will realize where he has gone to school. In "Wanderings"<sup>1</sup> we follow him, in a pomp of prose, through half the exotic by-ways of the world. Mr. Curle says that he was "always respectable and always lazy," but if he had had more of the character of the creative artist, who is neither respectable nor lazy, he would perhaps never have been so "creative" a traveller. For Mr. Curle aspires, and aspires successfully, to this latter rôle: "Travelling," he says, "is like reading; it requires, at its best, a critical frame of creative energy in the absorber which is far removed from the vague romanticism of the majority of even discerning people." Is it Mr. Curle's weakness that his Europe is rather threadbare, that he has so little to tell us that is interesting about France and Spain, that he achieves his effects best when the strong colours are, as it were, given to him by those "more outlandish places" that yield, among more sensual trophies, the rich anodyne of sadness and disillusion which is so assuaging to the neurotic of our day? But it is a pity to look such a splendid gift-horse in the mouth. "Who would not traverse the earth," Mr. Curle asks, "in the cycle of its enchantment?" He himself, whose senses are preternaturally alert, and who has given himself to the visible world with an active passion, is a tranquil day-dreamer also who knows how to shut out the present and register the gorgeous visions that float from the past across his inward eye. Mr. Curle tells us that from his earliest youth he has had a love of figures and a distrust of theories; that is why his childhood in the Scottish Border comes back to him with a pageantry as ample as that of the jungle itself. But it is the breath of the Tropics that he has felt most keenly, "that secret delirium which nothing can recall and which exists, perhaps, only for such as are under twenty." Peru, Jamaica, Guiana, the fringe and heart of Africa, there, one would say, Mr. Curle is at his best. A summer reader, however, whose fancy was inflamed impartially by the thought of the Isle of Sark, Damascus, the Victoria Falls, Greece, the Dolomites and the Côte d'Azur, might find him at his best everywhere.

#### SHORTER NOTICES.

IN "Country Sentiment"<sup>2</sup> Robert Graves discloses a vein of poetry as fine as a line of mercury. But there is no singing heart in him to go with his singing throat. The music of his verse falters and falls into little echoes of other poets or quarrels line by line with its meaning. In mind and feeling he is nearer Hardy than the lovely English lyricists he sounds like; his utterance and his voice never come together as they do with the poet of the "Shropshire Lad."

"A CRITIC IN PALL MALL"<sup>3</sup> is the title which the editor, Mr. E. V. Lucas, has given to the fifteenth, and presumably the final, volume of the pocket edition of Oscar Wilde. It contains forty reviews and brief articles of the years 1885-1890. Here we have the Wilde of the intermediate period, the commentator on the later phases of Pre-Raphaelitism; a large proportion of the papers deal with Morris, Swinburne, Pater and Symonds and the early writings of W. B. Yeats, with related notes on Whitman and on Shelley, Keats and Shakespeare. Apart from these preoccupations, there is nothing especially characteristic about the collection except, perhaps,

<sup>1</sup> "Wanderings: A Book of Travel and Reminiscence." Richard Curle. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co.

<sup>2</sup> "Country Sentiment." Robert Graves. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

<sup>3</sup> "A Critic in Pall Mall." Oscar Wilde. New York: G. P. Putnam's

a lightness of touch that distinguishes its contents from the ordinary book-review, and while they reveal the delicacy of Wilde's taste and the sincerity of his delight in art and letters they reveal his limitations, also, and the shallowness of his intellectual draught. The intelligent review of "Russian Novelists" has a certain historical interest as probably one of the earliest notices of Dostoevsky in English, but by far the most interesting, as it is the most carefully developed, essay in the book is "A Chinese Sage." This summary of the life and teachings of Chuang Tzū is written with a serenity, a faintly ironical charm rare even in Wilde's day, a day of charming prose. And some of the "Sententiae" at the end of the book are excellent.

MR. CARADOC EVANS handles the English language with a good deal of skill; he also possesses a certain deftness of dramatization. Having these two qualities, he can tell a readable story; and provided one has a taste for garbage, "My Neighbours"<sup>4</sup> should prove exceptionally readable. It is absurd (even in an advertisement) to speak, as do the publishers of the book, of "the higher forms of creative literature" in connexion with it. It is only a clever but ill-natured caricature of the Welsh people by a disgruntled Welshman. G. K. Chesterton says somewhere that if you want to save Pimlico, you must love it and hate it at the same time; and it is sure, that if you want to tell the truth about a people, you must both love them and hate them. Mr. Caradoc Evans only hates his people; therefore he only libels them. Listening to Mr. Lloyd George's patriotic perorations, you might suppose that there are no pigsties in Wales; but according to Mr. Caradoc Evans, there is nothing but pigsties. It is of course possible, that in the uplands of Cardigan and Carmarthenshire (where Mr. Evans hails from), there may be degenerate villages inhabited by such folk as he describes in this book; and there are some folk of the kind in every village, not only in Wales but in every country. But Mr. Evans leaves you with the impression that Wales is entirely peopled by mean, lying, hypocritical sensualists. Had Mr. Caradoc Evans professed only to draw certain unpleasant types which are to be found in Wales, at the worst the book would be unsavoury; at the best, it might even be useful. But as he makes it quite clear that he is describing the genus Welshman, it is necessary to say (as Mark Twain said of the publisher) that he has an impediment in his truth.

The Welshman, being human, has his frailties; and one of these is—or was—an excess of veneration for public personages, such as members of Parliament and preachers. Mr. Evans makes great game of this foolishness; and indeed the case calls for a little salutary satire. But our author is too bitter to be a good satirist, too bitter even to be truthful. He treats the Welsh preacher and Welsh religion generally with a heavy-handed and not very scrupulous ridicule. I happen to know something of Welsh religion, and I have written not a little in criticism of it. But the religion which Mr. Evans describes I have never met with. Moreover, it is also chargeable to Mr. Evans that unless he has forgotten his Welsh speech, he deliberately and repeatedly mistranslates Welsh expressions. For example, he introduces the preacher as the "Respected" So-and-So; and the epithet sounds as silly as Mr. Evans intends it should. But the word "Respected" in this connexion is simply a literal translation of the Welsh word which is the conventional equivalent of the English "Reverend," and means just as much or just as little.

We Welsh have many grievous faults, and we have not been as faithful in self-criticism as we should have been, But Mr. Caradoc Evans's book does not describe us. It describes only Mr. Caradoc Evans's own soul; and it is not a pretty sight.

#### A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

PERHAPS the most striking fact in the development of latter-day culture has been the all but universal alliance of the younger artists and writers with the wage workers. What is at the bottom of this alliance? What is at the bottom of intellectual proletarianism? Why is it that the writers and artists of our day are not disturbed by the anxious fears of the traditional guardians of literature and science, who foresee in all this nothing but a lowering of standards?

<sup>4</sup> "My Neighbours." Caradoc Evans. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

To these younger artists the alliance is, on its lowest ground, a plain effect of necessity. Their economic status, thanks partly to the capitalist regime, which has pushed the creative life to the wall, places them in the working-class; and where one's treasure is, or one's lack of treasure, there one's heart is also. A natural economic bond, in short, with all the overtones of sentiment and loyalty that any natural bond induces, unites in our day the workers of brain and hand. But this is not the only tie. To create is to affirm one's "free will," and writers and artists would cease to be creators if their lives were determined by "necessity." The brain workers have been compelled to make common cause with the hand workers, but they have at the same time elected to do so. That this choice is quite spontaneous is proved by the large number of writers and artists who have made the choice without the necessity. And why have they made the choice?

SINCE the French Revolution and the rise of the bourgeoisie the sincere artist has been at sword's points with society: the great spirits of the nineteenth century were all members of the Opposition. Few indeed are the exceptions to this rule, whether one seeks among the Olympians, the Carlyles, the Neitzsches and the Tolstoys, or among those weaker but no less honest spirits, Baudelaire and Heine, for example, who, incapable of a mightier rage, gave themselves to the lesser task of "shocking the grocers," the complacent purveyors, that is to say, of material comfort. Against what were they in revolt? Against, to speak generally, the mechanization of human nature implicit in a regime of trade as distinguished from industry, and of wage-servitude as distinguished from artisanship. And what does one mean by the mechanization of human nature? The blocking of those impulses that make man a creator, that enable him to grow, that endow him with love, life and light. It was on behalf of the artist in every man that the great spirits of the last age warred against society: their sympathy with the exploited classes was an affirmation of the instinct of workmanship in themselves. As members, for the most part, of the bourgeoisie, they felt that they were in a false position, a fact that explains half their anger, the anger, for instance, of Ruskin, who railed at himself for the "fine raiment" he wore, and of Tolstoy, who tried to live like a peasant. If they did not fully cast in their lot with the workers, it was perhaps because artists, who have so supremely the power to inspire and direct revolutionary changes, can not, on the other hand, initiate them, and because in the nineteenth century the workers offered no sufficiently definite promise of a united force capable of bringing in a new heaven and a new earth. As for the alliance of this age, the alliance with the workers, it is the logical consequence of the opposition of the last age, the opposition to the bourgeoisie: artists and writers have as it were legitimized their position, and they have done so by simply following their instincts as craftsmen and producers.

ONE remembers Rodin's lifelong quarrel with "official art"; it was really waged in the name of all his fellow-artists. Rodin's life, indeed, was more prophetic than his work: he was throughout that long age of compromise and misunderstanding the very type of the artist in the contemporary sense, the artist who has joined forces with the workers because he knows that he is himself, comprehensively, a workingman. One remembers Bernard Shaw's description of Rodin as an "old stone-mason": it tallies well with his own account of his point of view, his conception of the artist's life. Rodin has told us of his happy fortune as a boy in Paris: he found, still existing there, an ancient school for artisans, an almost forgotten relic of earlier days, despised by the frequenters of the Beaux-Arts, where were perpetuated the traditions of the old stone-cutters of the Middle Ages. His master, his great master, as he called him, from whom he learned the most, was a poor and unknown workman who, marvel of marvels, knew how

to carve a leaf with all the profound understanding, the truth of feeling of some nameless craftsman of the thirteenth century. To Rodin one of those leaves was worth more than all the meretricious grandiosities of the official artists. He himself never forgot, never outlived, that proud apprenticeship the secret of which had been almost lost since the Renaissance. In proclaiming himself a stone-cutter, Rodin really reinstated the artist in his rights.

So how can the modern artist share this anxiety about the lowering of standards? He knows well enough that the standards in question are for the most part not creative standards but class standards, imposed upon art in the days of its bondage in order to make it serve the comfort and the vanity and the fatuous emotions of the overfed. Where sincerity exists, where love exists, where the spirit grows, there standards will always be found, for men will seek them with a passionate curiosity: it is a fantastic error to suppose that anything truly great can die out of the memory of humankind. Morals—what are they but a matter of geography, as Madame Du Barry said?—and what is technique? Standards of classes, of races, of ages, in short, are as friable, as insubstantial as the pageantry of the clouds.

IT is true, of course, that the ancient traditions of honourable craftsmanship have been almost lost among the workers. In that respect again the workers and the artists are in the same boat! Those traditions, the pre-industrial heritage of humanity, were the expression of man astride of his instincts, and the whole effort of the social revolution is to reinstate those instincts again. One might say that the social function of the artist, fortunate as he is in his relative independence of the industrial process, in his residue of "free will," is to reinfuse the workers with the sense of the craft, of the "joy in work" of which Morris spoke. For the more poignant the vision of the end of revolution, the swifter and more effective will be the conquest of the means. To recover the virtues of the worker for the worker is a worthy task, but it can safely be left, however, to those who have virtue to spare: it is enough at present for artists to learn how to be workers themselves. Let them take a leaf out of the book of Michelangelo (not in his moral aspect but for his realistic view of the *métier*) who, petty noble as he was by birth, used to go to bed with his apprentices—with his boots on.

FINALLY, in repudiating a gentility that is foreign to his instincts, in returning once more to his normal status as a simple workman, the contemporary artist finds himself no longer at cross-purposes with the main current of society: like the artists of the Ages of Faith, he can freely feel that he is co-operating in a universal effort of the human spirit. He is at one with the great body of workers, he feels himself called no longer primarily to oppose and destroy existing institutions but rather to assist in bringing to birth that Utopia to which the cause of the proletariat is committed by long tradition, by the voice of its prophets, and by the instinct of workmanship itself. There is the International of which every poet has dreamed, there alone, visibly in process of realization. A great mass of organized desire, of brute instinct, if you will, of sheer naked self-interest, pushes behind him toward the goal of which he alone perhaps apprehends the full glory. Matter itself is flowing his way, human matter that asks for nothing but to be transmuted into spirit.

I RECOMMEND the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"Czechoslovak Stories," translated and edited by Sarka B. Hrbkova. New York: Duffield and Co.

"Woman," by Magdeleine Marx. New York: Seltzer.

"The Negro Faces America," by Herbert S. Seligmann. New York: Harper and Brothers.

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